CONGREVE'S

WAY OF THE WORLD,

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,

REVISED BY

J. P. KEMBLE.

AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED AS IT IS ACTED BY

THEIR MAJESTIES SERVANTS

OF THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE,

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BRITISH MUSEUM

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Sir Willfull Witwoud,	*Mr. King.*
Fainall,	*Mr. Wroughton.*
Mirabell,	*Mr. Kemble.*
Witwoud,	*Mr. Banniſter, Jun.*
Petulant,	*Mr. Suett.*
Waitwell,	*Mr. Palmer.*
Thomas,	*Mr. Wathen,*
James,	*Mr. Surmont.*
Coachman,	*Mr. Maddocks.*
Porter,	*Mr. Evans.*
Lady Wiſhfort,	*Miſs Pope.*
Mrs. Fainall,	*Mrs. Humphries.*
Millamant,	*Miſs Biggs.*
Marwood,	*Mrs. Powell.*
Foible,	*Miſs De Camp.*
Mincing,	*Miſs Mellon.*
Peg,	*Miſs B. Menage.*
Bar-maid.	*Miſs Tidſwell.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE WAY of the WORLD.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chocolate-House.

MIRABELL *and* FAINALL *discover'd, playing at Cards.* BETTY *waiting in the Bar.*

Mir. YOU are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mir. What you pleaſe. I'll play on, to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not ſo indifferent: You are thinking of ſomething elſe now, and play too negligently; the coldneſs of a loſing gameſter leſſens the pleaſure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that ſlighted his ill fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalu'd the loſs of her reputation.

Mir. You have a taſte extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleaſures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why ſo reſerv'd? Something has put you out of humour.

Mir. Not at all: I happen to be grave to-day, and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confeſs, Millamant and you quarrel'd laſt

night, after I left you: My fair couſin has ſome humours that wou'd tempt the patience of a Stoick. What, ſome coxcomb came in, and was well receiv'd by her, while you were by?

Mir. Witwoud and Petulant;—and, what was worſe, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius,—or, to ſum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wiſhfort came in.

Fain. O, there it is then:—She has a laſting paſſion for you, and with reaſon.—What, then my wife was there?

Mir. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more whom I never ſaw before: ſeeing me, they all put on their grave faces; whiſper'd one another; then complain'd aloud of the vapours; and, after, fell into a profound ſilence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mir. For which reaſon, I reſolv'd not to ſtir. At laſt, the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity, with an invective againſt long viſits. I would not have underſtood her; but, Millamant joining in the argument, I roſe, and, with a conſtrain'd ſmile, told her, I thought nothing was ſo eaſy, as to know when a viſit began to be troubleſome: She redden'd; and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame, to reſent what ſhe ſpoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mir. She is more miſtreſs of herſelf, than to be under the neceſſity of ſuch a reſignation.

Fain. What! tho' half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mir. I was then in ſuch a humour, that I ſhou'd have been better pleas'd, if ſhe had been leſs diſcreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; laſt night was one of their cabal-nights; they have 'em three times a week, and meet, by turns, at one another's apartments; where they come together, like the coroner's inqueſt, to ſit upon the mur-

der'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd, that all the male ſex ſhou'd be excepted; but ſomebody mov'd that, to avoid ſcandal, there might be one man of the community; upon which motion, Witwoud and Petulant were enroll'd members.

Mir. And who may have been the foundreſs of this ſect? My Lady Wiſhfort, I warrant; who publiſhes her deteſtation of mankind; and, full of the vigour of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia, and let poſterity ſhift for itſelf; ſhe'll breed no more.

Fain. The diſcovery of your ſham addreſſes to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provok'd this ſeparation: had you diſſembled better, things might have continu'd in the ſtate of nature.

Mir. I did as much as man cou'd, with any reaſonable conſcience: I proceeded to the very laſt act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a ſong in her commendation: Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flatter'd further, unleſs a man ſhould endeavour downright perſonally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbad me. But; for the diſcovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. What ſhou'd provoke her to be your enemy, unleſs ſhe has made you advances which you have ſlighted? Women do not eaſily forgive omiſſions of that nature.

Mir. She was always civil to me, 'till of late: I confeſs, I am not one of thoſe coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that ſhe, who does not refuſe 'em every thing, can refuſe 'em no thing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and, tho' you may have cruelty enough not to anſwer a lady's advances, you have too much generoſity, not to be ten-

der of her honour. Yet you ſpeak with an indifference which ſeems to be affected,—and confeſſes you are conſcious of a negligence.

Mir You purſue the argument with a diſtruſt that ſeems to be unaffected,—and confeſſes you are conſcious of a concern, for which the lady is more indebted to you, than is your wife.

Fain. Fie, fie, friend! if you grow cenſorious, I muſt leave you:—I'll look upon the gameſters in the next room.

Mir. Who are they?

Fain. Petulant and Witwoud.—Bring me ſome chocolate.

Exit FAINALL.

Mir. Betty, what ſays your clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the laſt canonical hour, Sir.

Exit BETTY *with Chocolate.*

Mir. How pertinently the jade anſwers me! Ha! almoſt one o'clock! [*Looking on his watch.*

Enter JAMES.

O, y'are come—Well, is the grand affair over? You have been ſomething tedious.

James Sir, there's ſuch coupling at Pancras, that they ſtand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the laſt couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of diſpatch,—beſides, the parſon growing hoarſe, we were afraid his lungs wou'd have fail'd before it came to our turn,—ſo we drove round to Duke's-Place, and there they were riveted in a trice.

Mir. So, ſo:—You are ſure, they are married.

James. Married and bedded, Sir: I am witneſs.

Mir. Have you the certificate?

James. Here it is, Sir.

Mir. That's well.—Doyou go home again,—d'ye hear?—and bid Waitwell ſhake his ears, and Dame

Partlet ruſtle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Roſamond's Pond; that I may ſee her, before ſhe returns to her lady:—And, as you tender your ears, be ſecret.

Exit JAMES.

Re-enter FAINALL *and* BETTY.

Fain. Joy of your ſucceſs, Mirabell!—you look pleas'd.

Mir. Ay; I have been engag'd in a matter of ſome ſort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for diſcovery.

Enter a Porter.

Por. Is one 'Squire Witwoud here?

Bet. Yes; What's your buſineſs?

Por. I have a letter for him, from his brother Sir Wilfull, which I'm charg'd to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, friend:—that way.

Exit Porter.

Mir. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilfull Witwoud?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

Mir. I have ſeen him. He promiſes to be an extraordinary perſon: I think, you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half-brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was ſiſter to my Lady Wiſhfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you muſt call couſins too.

Mir I had rather be his relation, than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town, in order to equip himſelf for travel.

Mir. For travel! Why the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe ſhould know, we have blockheads of all ages.

Mir. 'Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and thoſe of the 'ſquire, his brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab;—one will melt in your mouth, and t'other ſet your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mir. So, one will be rotten, before he is ripe; and the other will be rotten, without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of baſhfulneſs and obſtinacy:—But, when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monſter in the Tempeſt; and much after the ſame manner. To give t'other his due, he has ſomething of good nature, and does not always want wit.

Mir. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place of compariſons. He is a fool with a good memory, and ſome few ſcraps of other folks wit. He is one whoſe converſation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exceptious; for he ſo paſſionately affects the reputation of underſtanding raillery, that he will conſtrue an affront into a jeſt; and call downright rudeneſs and ill language, ſatire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finiſh his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length:—Behold the original.

Enter WITWOUD, *and the Porter.*

Wit. Afford me your compaſſion, my dears; pity me, Fainall; Mirabell, pity me.

Exit Porter.

Mir. I do from my ſoul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Bet. Did not a meſſenger bring you one but now, Sir?

Wit. Ay;—but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard.—A meſſenger! A mule, a beaſt of burden;—he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyrick in a funeral ſermon, or a copy of commendatory verſes from one poet to another:—and, what's worſe, 'tis as ſure a forerunner of the author, as an epiſtle dedicatory.

Mir. A fool, and your brother, Witwoud!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half brother;—my half-brother he is;—no nearer, upon honour.

Mir. Then, 'tis poſſible, he may be but half a fool.

Wit. Good good, Mirabell,—le drole!—good, good.—Hang him! don't let's talk of him.—Fainall, how does your lady? 'Gad, I ſay any thing in the world, to get this fellow out of my head: I beg pardon, that I ſhou'd aſk a man of pleaſure, and the town, a queſtion at once ſo foreign and domeſtick. But I talk, like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I ſay: But ſhe's the beſt woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well, you don't know what you ſay; or elſe your commendation wou'd go near to make me either vain, or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgement, Mirabell?

Mir. You had better ſtep and aſk his wife, if you wou'd be credibly informed.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money,—my money it was;—I have no luck to day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play; for you are ſure to be too hard for him at repartee:

ſince you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune muſt be his of courſe.

Mir. I don't find that Petulant confeſſes the ſuperiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and wou'd breed debates.—Petulant's my friend, and a very honeſt fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a ſmattering—'faith and troth, a pretty deal of an odd ſort of a ſmall wit:—nay, I'll do him juſtice:—I'm his friend, I won't wrong him:—and, if he had any judgment in the world, he wou'd not be altogether contemptible.—Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him! the rogue has no manners at all, that I muſt own;—no more breeding than a bum-baily, that I grant you:—'Tis pity; the fellow has fire, and life.

Mir. What, courage?

Wit. Hum! 'faith, I don't know as to that,—I can't ſay as to that:—Yes, 'faith, in a controverſy, he'll contradict any body.

Mir. Tho' 'twere a man whom he fear'd, or a woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he ſpeaks;—we have all our failings;—you are too hard upon him, you are, 'faith. Let me excuſe him:—I can defend moſt of his faults, except one or two:—One he has, that's the truth on't, if he were my brother, I cou'd not acquit him:—That, indeed, I cou'd wiſh were otherwiſe.

Mir. Ay, marry, what's that, Witwoud?

Wit. O, pardon me:—Expoſe the infirmities of my friend!—No, my dear; excuſe me there.

Fain. What, I warrant, he's unſincere, or 'tis ſome ſuch trifle.

Wit. No, no,—What if he be? 'Tis no matter for that; his wit will excuſe that: a wit ſhou'd no more be ſincere, than a woman conſtant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mir. May be, you think him too poſitive?

Wit. No, no; his being poſitive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up converſation.

Fain. Too illiterate?

Wit. That? that's his happineſs;——his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to ſhow his natural parts.

Mir. He wants words?

Wit. Ay, but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleaſure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent?

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mir. Vain?

Wit. No.

Mir. What, he ſpeaks unſeaſonable truths ſometimes, becauſe he has not wit enough to invent an evaſion?

Wit. Truths? Ha, ha, ha! No, no,—ſince you will have it,—I mean, he never ſpeaks truth at all,——that's all.—He will lie, like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter:—now, that is a fault.

Enter a Coachman.

Coach. Is Maſter Petulant here, miſtreſs?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach would ſpeak with him.

Fain. O brave Petulant, three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Exeunt Coachman, and BETTY.

Wit. To tell you a ſecret, theſe are girls, whom he allows coach-hire, and ſomething more by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

Mir. How!

Wit. You ſhall ſee, he won't go to 'em, becauſe there's no more company here to take notice of him.—Why, this is nothing to what he us'd to do; before he found out this way, I have known him call for himſelf.

Fain. Call for himſelf! What doſt thou mean?

Wit. Mean?—Why, he wou'd ſlip you out of this chocolate-houſe, juſt when you had been talking to him;—as ſoon as your back was turn'd, whip he was gone;—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hat and cloak, ſlap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice;—where he wou'd ſend in for himſelf,—that I mean,—call for himſelf, wait for himſelf; nay, and, what's more, not finding himſelf, ſometimes leave a letter for himſelf.

Mir. I confeſs, this is ſomething extraordinary.—I believe, he waits for himſelf now, he is ſo long a coming:—O, I aſk his pardon.

Enter PETULANT *and* BETTY.

Bet. Sir, the coach ſtays.

Pet. Well, well; I come.——'Sbud, a man had as good be a profeſs'd midwife, as a profeſs'd gallant, at this rate;—to be knock'd up, and rais'd, at all hours, and in all places!—Plague on 'em! I won't come,—d'ye hear?—tell 'em, I won't come.—Let 'em ſnivel, and cry their hearts out.

Exit BETTY.

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one; let it paſs:—I have a humour to be cruel.

Mir. I hope, they are not perſons of condition, that you uſe at this rate.

Pet. Condition!—condition's a dry'd fig, if I am not in humour.

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great anger.

Exit BETTY, *thro' the Bar.*

Pet. Enough; let 'em trundle:----Anger helps complexion, ſaves paint.

Fain. This continence is all diſſembled; this is in order to have ſomething to brag of, the next time he makes court to Millamant, and ſwear he has abandoned the whole ſex for her ſake.

FAINALL *and* WITWOUD *retire.*

Mir. Have you not left off your impudent pretenſions there yet? I ſhall cut your throat, ſome time or other, Petulant, about that buſineſs.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that paſs:——There are other throats to be cut.

Mir. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pet. Not I,—I mean no body:—I know nothing.—You have an uncle,—Sir Rowland,—have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wiſhfort's?

Mir. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough:—You and he are not friends; and, if he ſhou'd marry, and have a child, you may be diſinherited,---ha?

Mir. Where haſt thou ſtumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that:---Why, then, ſay, I know ſomething.

Mir. Come, thou art an honeſt fellow, Petulant, and ſhalt make love to my miſtreſs; thou ſhalt, 'faith.---What haſt thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I? Nothing I. If throats are to be cut, let ſwords claſh; ſnug's the word; I ſhrug, and am ſilent.

Mir. O, raillery, raillery.—Come, I know, thou art in the womens' ſecrets—I know, you ſtaid at Millamant's laſt night, after I went.—Was there any mention made of my uncle, or me? Tell me.—If thou hadſt but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant; Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would ſhow as dim by thee, as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he wou'd no more be ſeen by thee, than Mercury is by the ſun:—Come, I'm ſure, thou wo't tell me,

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common ſenſe, then, for the future?

Mir. 'Faith, I'll do what I can for thee; and I'll pray, that heav'n may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, hark'ee.

MIRABELL *and* PETULANT *retire.*—FAINALL *and* WITWOUD *come forward.*

Fain. Petulant, and you, both will find Mirabell as warm a rival, as a lover.

Wit. Pſhaw, pſhaw! That ſhe laughs at Petulant, is plain.—And, for my part,——but that it is almoſt a faſhion to admire her,---I ſhould---Hark'ee,---To tell you a ſecret,---but let it go no further,---between friends, I ſhall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handſome; but ſhe's a ſort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought, you had dy'd for her.

Wit. Umh!--No,——

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what ſhe will hardly allow any body elſe:—Now, demme, I ſhould hate that, if ſhe were as handſome as Cleopatra.—Mirabell is not ſo ſure of her, as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think ſo?

Wit. We ſtaid pretty late there laſt night; and heard ſomething of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town,—and is between him and the beſt part of his eſtate: Mirabell and he are at ſome diſtance, as my Lady Wiſhfort has been told; and, you know, ſhe hates Mirabell worſe, than a quaker hates a parrot, or than a fiſhmonger hates a hard froſt. Whether this uncle has ſeen Mrs Millamant, or not, I cannot ſay; but there were items of ſuch a treaty being in embryo; and, if it ſhou'd come to life, poor Mirabell wou'd be, in ſome ſort, unfortunately fobb'd, i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impoſſible, Millamant ſhou'd hearken to it.

Wit. 'Faith, my dear, I can't tell; ſhe's a woman, and a kind of a humouriſt.

MIRABELL *and* PETULANT *come forward.*

Mir. And this is the ſum of what you cou'd collect laſt night?

Pet. The quinteſſence.—May be, Witwoud knows more; he ſtay'd longer:—Beſides, they never mind him; they ſay any thing before him.

Mir. I thought, you had been the greateſt favourite.

Pet. Ay, téte-a-téte; but not in public; becauſe I make remarks.

Mir. You do?

Pet. Ay, ay,—plague!—I'm malicious, man; now he's ſoft, you know; they are not in awe of him:—The fellow's well bred, he's what you call—a what-d'ye-call-'em,—a fine gentleman;—but he's ſilly withal.

Mir. I thank you, I know as much as my curioſity requires.—Fainall, are you for the Mall?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talk'd of being there.

Mir. I thought, you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival.

Wit. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wiſhfort:—plague on him! I ſhall be troubled with him too:—what ſhall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him, for his eſtate; that I may beg you afterwards; and ſo have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O, rare Petulant! thou art as quick as fire in a froſty morning. Thou ſhalt to the Mall with us; and we'll be very ſevere.

Pet. Enough; I'm in a humour to be ſevere.

Mir. Are you? 'Pray, then, walk by yourſelves:—Let not us be acceſſary to your putting the ladies out of countenance, with your ſenſeleſs ribaldry; which you roar out aloud, as often as they paſs by you; and, when you have made a handſome woman bluſh, then, you think, you have been ſevere.

Pet. What, what? Then, let 'em either ſhow their innocence, by not underſtanding what they hear; or elſe, ſhow their diſcretion, by not hearing what they wou'd not be thought to underſtand.

Mir. But haſt not thou then ſenſe enough to know, that thou ought'ſt to be moſt aſham'd thyſelf, when thou haſt put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand:—I always take bluſhing either for a ſign of guilt, or ill breeding.

Mir. I confeſs, you ought to think ſo;—you are in the right;—that you may plead the error of your judgement in defence of your practice.

Where modeſty's ill manners, 'tis but fit,
That impudence and malice paſs for wit.

Exeunt.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—ST. JAMES's PARK.

Enter MARWOOD *and* Mrs. FAINALL.

Mrs. *Fain.* AY, ay, dear Marwood; if we will be happy, we muſt find the means in ourſelves, and among ourſelves. Men are ever in extremes; either doting, or averſe. While they are lovers, if they have fire and ſenſe, their jealouſies are inſupportable: and, when they ceaſe to love, (we ought to think at leaſt,) they loath; they look upon us with horror and diſtaſte; they meet us, like the ghoſts of what we were; and, as from ſuch, fly from us.

Mar. True; 'tis an unhappy circumſtance of life, that love ſhou'd ever die before us; and that the man ſo often ſhou'd out-live the lover. But, ſay what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd: To paſs our youth in dull indifference, to refuſe the ſweets of life, becauſe they once muſt leave us, is as prepoſterous, as to wiſh to have been born old, becauſe we one day muſt be old:—For my part, my youth may wear and waſte, but it ſhall never ruſt, in my poſſeſſion.

Mrs. *Fain.* Bleſs me! how have I been deceiv'd! Why, you profeſs a libertine.

Mar. You ſee my friendſhip, by my freedom. Come, be as ſincere; acknowledge, that your ſentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. *Fain.* Never.

Mar. You hate mankind?

Mrs. *Fain.* Heartily, inveterately.

Mar. Your huſband?

Mrs. *Fain.* Moſt tranſcendently; ay, tho' I ſay it, meritoriouſly.

Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. *Fain.* There.

Mar. I join with you: What I have ſaid, has been to try you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Is it poſſible? Doſt thou hate thoſe vipers, men?

Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to deſpiſe 'em: the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. *Fain.* There ſpoke the ſpirit of an Amazon.

Mar. And yet, I am thinking ſometimes, to carry my averſion further.

Mrs. *Fain.* How?

Mar. 'Faith, by marrying.

Mrs. *Fain.* 'Wou'd thou wert married to Mirabell.

Mar. 'Wou'd I were.

Mrs. *Fain.* You change colour.

Mar. Becauſe I hate him.

Mrs. *Fain.* So do I; but I can hear him nam'd.—But, what reaſon have you to hate him in particular?

Mar. I never lov'd him; he is, and always was, inſufferably proud.

Mrs. *Fain.* By the reaſon you give for your averſion, one would think it diſſembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies muſt acquit him.

Mar. O, then, it ſeems, you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks, you look a little pale, and now you fluſh again.

Mrs. *Fain.* Do I? I think, I am a little ſick o' the ſudden.

Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. *Fain.* My huſband.—Don't you ſee him?

He turn'd ſhort upon me unawares, and has almoſt overcome me.

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! He comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. *Fain.* For you;—for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Enter FAINALL *and* MIRABELL.

Fain. My dear!

Mrs. *Fain.* My ſoul!

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs. *Fain.* D'ye think ſo?

Mir. He is the only man that does, madam.

Mrs. *Fain.* The only man that wou'd tell me ſo, at leaſt; and the only man, from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. O, my dear, I am ſatisfy'd of your tenderneſs, I know, you cannot reſent any thing from me; eſpecially, what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs. *Fain.* Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleaſant relation laſt night: I wou'd fain hear it out.

Mir. The perſons concern'd in that affair, have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid, Mr. Fainall will be cenſorious.

Mrs. *Fain.* He has a humour more prevailing than his curioſity, and will willingly diſpenſe with the hearing of one ſcandalous ſtory, to avoid giving an occaſion to make another, by being ſeen to walk with his wife.—This way, Mr. Mirabell; and, I dare promiſe, you will oblige us both.

Exeunt Mrs. FAINALL, *and* MIRABELL.

Fain. Excellent creature!—Well, ſure, if I ſhou'd live to be rid of my wife, I ſhou'd be a miſerable man.

Mar. Ay?

Fain. For, having only that one hope, the accompliſhment of it, of conſequence, muſt put an end to

all my hopes,—and what a wretch is he, who muſt ſurvive his hopes!

Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. 'Faith, I think not.

Mar. 'Pray, let us; I have a reaſon.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mar. If I am, is it inconſiſtent with my love to you, that I am tender of your honour?

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were a particular underſtanding between my wife and him.

Mar. I think, ſhe does not hate him to that degree, ſhe wou'd be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too inſenſible.

Mar. It may be, you are deceiv'd.

Fain. It may be ſo.—I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd, madam; and you are falſe.

Mar. That I am falſe! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know, I ſee through all your little arts.—Come, you both love him; and both have equally diſſembled your averſion. Your mutual jealouſies of one another have made you claſh, till you have both ſtruck fire: I have ſeen the warm confeſſion red'ning on your cheeks, and ſparkling from your eyes.

Mar. 'Tis falſe.—I challenge you, to ſhow an inſtance that can confirm your groundleſs accuſation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is inſenſible; and your reſentment follows his neglect.—An inſtance? The injuries you have done him are a proof; your interpoſing in his love.—What cauſe had you to make diſcoveries of his pretended paſſion,—to unde-

ceive the credulous aunt,—and be the officious obſtacle of his match with Millamant?

Mar. My obligations to my lady urg'd me: I had profeſs'd a friendſhip to her; and cou'd not ſee her eaſy nature ſo abus'd by that diſſembler.

Fain. What! was it conſcience then? Profeſs'd a friendſhip! O, the pious friendſhips of the female ſex! Ha, ha, ha!—You are my wife's friend too.

Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me? Have I been falſe to her, through ſtrict fidelity to you, and ſacrific'd my friendſhip, to keep my love inviolate,—and have you the baſeneſs to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it ſhou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious:—And do you reflect that guilt upon me, which ſhou'd lie buried in your boſom?

Fain. You miſinterpret my reproof: I meant but to remind you of the ſlight account you once cou'd make of ſtricteſt ties, when ſet in competition with your love to me.

Mar. 'Tis falſe,—you urg'd it with deliberate malice:—'Twas ſpoke in ſcorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your reſentment, begets your rage:—If yet you lov'd, you cou'd forgive a jealouſy: but you are ſtung, to find you are diſcover'd.

Mar. It ſhall be all diſcover'd: you too ſhall be diſcover'd; be ſure, you ſhall.—I can but be expos'd,—if I do it myſelf, I ſhall prevent your baſeneſs.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mar. Diſcloſe it to your wife; own what has paſt between us.

Fain. Frenzy!——

Mar. By all my wrongs, I'll do't.—I'll publiſh to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my

fame and fortune: with both I truſted you,—you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth!

Fain. Your fame I have preſerv'd: your fortune has been beſtow'd, as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleaſures which we both have ſhar'd. Yet, had not you been falſe, I had ere this repaid it:—'Tis true;—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have ſtol'n their marriage, my lady had been incens'd beyond all means of reconcilement; Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then wou'd have deſcended to my wife:—And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and ſquander it on love and you?

Mar. I loath the name of love, after ſuch uſage; and, next to the guilt with which you wou'd aſperſe me, I ſcorn you moſt.—Farewell.

Fain. Nay, we muſt not part thus.

Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm ſorry——

Mar. I care not.—Let me go.—Break my hands, do:—I'd leave 'em, to get looſe.

Fain. I wou'd not hurt you for the world. You know, I love you.

Mar. Poor diſſembling!—O, that—Well, it is not yet——

Fain. What? what is it not? what is it not yet? It is not yet too late——

Mar. No, it is not yet too late:—I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mar. But not to loath, deteſt, abhor, mankind, myſelf, and the whole treacherous world. *(Weeping.)*

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance—Come, I aſk your pardon—No tears—I was to blame;—I cou'd not love you, and be eaſy in my doubts.—'Pray, forbear.—I believe you; I'm convinc'd, I've done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way, will make

amends:—I'll hate my wife yet more,—damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth;—and we'll retire somewhere, any where, to another world.—I'll marry thee—Be pacify'd.—'Sdeath, they come.—Hide your face, your tears.—This way, this way,—be perſuaded.

Exeunt.

Enter MIRABELL *and* Mrs. FAINALL.

Mrs. *Fain.* They are here yet.

Mir. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. *Fain.* While I only hated my huſband, I cou'd bear to ſee him; but, ſince I have deſpis'd him, he's too offenſive.

Mir. O, you ſhou'd hate with prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* You have been the cauſe, that I have lov'd without bounds; and wou'd you ſet limits to that averſion, of which you have been the occaſion?—Why did you make me marry this man?

Mir. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs. *Fain.* I ought to ſtand in ſome degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mir. In juſtice to you, I have made you privy to my whole deſign; and put it in your power, to ruin, or advance, my fortune.

Mrs. *Fain.* Whom have you inſtructed to repreſent your uncle, Sir Rowland?

Mir. Waitwell, my ſervant.

Mrs. *Fain.* He is an humble ſervant to Foible, my mother's woman; and may win her to your intereſt.

Mir. Care is taken for that:—She is won, and worn, by this time:—They were married this morning.

Mrs. *Fain.* Who?

Mir. Waitwell and Foible. I wou'd not tempt my ſervant to betray me, by truſting him too far. If

your mother, in hopes to ruin me, ſhou'd conſentt marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Moſca in the Fox, ſtand upon terms; ſo I made him ſure before-hand.

Mrs. *Fain.* So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will diſcover the impoſture betimes; and releaſe her, by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

Mir. Yes, upon condition that ſhe conſent to my marriage with her niece, and ſurrender the moiety of her fortune in her poſſeſſion.

Mrs. *Fain.* She talk'd laſt night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mir. That was by Foible's direction, and my inſtruction; that ſhe might ſeem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. *Fain.* Well, I have an opinion of your ſucceſs; for, I believe, my lady will do any thing to get an huſband: and when ſhe has this, which you have provided for her, I ſuppoſe, ſhe will ſubmit to any thing, to get rid of him.

Mir. Yes, I think, the good lady wou'd marry any thing that reſembled a man, though 'twere no more, than what a butler cou'd pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. *Fain.* Female frailty!—Here's your miſtreſs.

Mir. Here ſhe comes, i'faith, full ſail, with her fan ſpread, and ſtreamers out, and a ſhoal of fools for tenders.—Ha! no, I cry her mercy.

Mrs. *Fain.* I ſee but one poor empty ſculler, and he tows her woman after him..

Enter MILLAMANT.

Mir. You ſeem to be unattended, madam.—You us'd to have the *beau monde* throng after you; and a flock of admirers hovering round you,——

Enter WITWOUD *and* MINCING.

Wit. Like moths about a candle.—I had like to have loſt my compariſon, for want of breath.

Mill. O, I have deny'd myſelf airs to-day. I have walk'd as faſt through the croud,——

Wit. As a favourite juſt diſgrac'd, and with as few followers.

Mill. Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your ſimilitudes; for I am as ſick of 'em,——

Wit. As a phyſician of a good air.—I cannot help it, madam; though 'tis againſt myſelf.

Mill. Yet again?—Mincing, ſtand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a ſkreen before a great fire. I confeſs, I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. *Fain.* But, dear Millamant, why were you ſo long?

Mill. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haſte? I have aſk'd every living thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new faſhion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your ſimilitudes.—No, you met her huſband, and did not aſk him for her.

Mir. By your leave, Witwoud, that were like enquiring after an old faſhion, to aſk a huſband for his wife.

Wit. Hum! A hit, a hit, a palpable hit,—I confeſs it.

Mrs. *Fain.* You were dreſs'd, before I came abroad.

Mill. Ay, that's true.—O, but then I had—Mincing, what had I? Why was I ſo long?

Minc. O, mem, your la'ſhip ſtaid, to peruſe a pacquet of letters.

Mill. O, ay, letters.—I had letters:—I am perſecuted with letters.—I hate letters: No body knows how to write letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why:—They ſerve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find, I muſt keep copies.

Mill. Only with thoſe in verſe, Mr. Witwoud never pin up my hair with proſe. I think, I try'd once, Mincing?

Minc. O, mem, I ſhall never forget it.

Mill. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Minc. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem; and all to no purpoſe. But, when your la'ſhip pins it up with poetry, it ſits ſo pleaſant the next day as any thing, and is ſo pure and ſo crips.

Wit. Indeed, ſo crips?

Minc. You're ſuch a critic, Mr. Witwoud.

Mill. Mirabell, did you take exceptions laſt night? O, ay, and went away.—Now I think on't, I'm angry: No, now I think on't, I'm pleas'd;—for, I believe, I gave you ſome pain.

Mir Does that pleaſe you?

Mill. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mir. You wou'd affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleaſing.

Mill. O, I aſk your pardon for that:—One's cruelty is one's power; and, when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy, one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay; ſuffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to deſtroy your lover,—and then how vain, how loſt, a thing you'll be!—Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handſome, when you've loſt your lover; your beauty dies upon the inſtant; for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he beſtows your charms:—Your glaſs is all a cheat; the ugly, and the old, whom the looking-glaſs mortifies, yet, after commendation, can be flatter'd by it, and diſcover beauties in it; for that reflects our praiſes, rather than your face.

Mill O, the vanity of theſe men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not hand-

ſome; Now, you muſt know, they cou'd not commend one, if one was not handſome. Beauty the lover's gift! Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as faſt as one pleaſes; and they live as long as one pleaſes, and they die as ſoon as one pleaſes; and then, if one pleaſes, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making ſo many card-matches.

Mill. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo: they can but reflect what we look, and ſay; vain, empty, things, if we are ſilent, or unſeen, and want a being.

Mir. Yet, to thoſe two vain, empty, things, you owe two the greateſt pleaſures of your life.

Mill. How ſo?

Mir. To your lover, you owe the pleaſure of hearing yourſelf prais'd; and to an echo, the pleaſure of hearing yourſelves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking ſo inceſſantly, ſhe won't give an echo fair play; ſhe has that everlaſting rotation of tongue, that an echo muſt wait till ſhe dies, before it can catch her laſt words.

Mill. O, fiction!—Fainall, let us leave theſe men.

Mir. (*Aſide to Mrs.* FAINALL.) Draw off Witwoud.

Mrs. *Fain.* I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

Exeunt Mrs. FAINALL *and* WITWOUD.

Mir. I wou'd beg a little private audience too.—You had the tyranny to deny me laſt night; tho' you knew I came, to impart a ſecret to you, that concern'd my love.

Mill. You ſaw I was engag'd.

Mir. Unkind!—You had the leiſure to entertain a herd of fools; things who viſit you from their exceſſive idleneſs; beſtowing on your eaſineſs that time,

which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in ſuch ſociety? It is impoſſible, they ſhou'd admire you; they are not capable: or, if they were, it ſhou'd be to you as a mortification; for, ſure, to pleaſe a fool, is ſome degree of folly.

Mill. I pleaſe myſelf.——Beſides, ſometimes to converſe with fools, is for my health.

Mir. Your health! Is there a worſe diſeaſe, than the converſation of fools?

Mill. Yes, the vapours; fools are phyſick for it, next to aſſa-fœtida.——I think, I muſt reſolve, after all, not to have you:——We ſhan't agree.

Mir. Not in our phyſick, it may be.

Mill. And yet, our diſtemper, in all likelihood, will be the ſame; for we ſhall be ſick of one another.—I ſhan't endure to be reprimanded, nor inſtructed; 'tis ſo dull, to act always by advice; and ſo tedious, to be told of one's faults:—I can't bear it.---Well, I won't have you, Mirabell,---I'm reſolv'd,---I think.——You may go:---Ha, ha, ha!---What wou'd you give, that you cou'd help loving me?

Mir. I wou'd give ſomething, that you did not know I cou'd not help it.

Mill. Come, don't look grave then.---Well, what do you ſay to me?

Mir. I ſay, that a man may as ſoon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honeſty, as win a woman with plain dealing and ſincerity.

Mill. Sententious Mirabell!---Pr'ythee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wiſe face.

Mir. You are merry, madam; but I would perſuade you, for a moment, to be ſerious.

Mill. What! with that face? No; if you keep your countenance, 'tis impoſſible, I ſhou'd hold mine. Well, after all, there is ſomething very moving in a love-ſick face. Ha, ha, ha!---Well, I won't laugh; don't be peeviſh.---Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light.---Well, Mirabell, if

ever you will win me, woo me now.—Nay, if you are ſo tedious, fare you well.——I ſee, they are walking away.

Mir. Can you not find in the variety of your diſpoſition one moment,—

Mill. To hear you tell me, Foible's married, and your plot like to ſpeed.—No.

Mir. But how you came to know it,—

Mill. Without the help of conjuration, you can't imagine; unleſs ſhe ſhould tell me herſelf.—Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to conſider; and, when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

Exeunt MILLAMANT *and* MINCING.

Mir. Think of you!—To think of a whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a whirlwind, were a caſe of more ſteady contemplation; a very tranquillity of mind and manſion.——O, here come my pair of turtles.

Enter WAITWELL *and* FOIBLE.

What, billing ſo ſweetly! Is not Valentine's day over with you yet?——Sirrah, Waitwell, why, ſure, you think, you were marry'd for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, Sir. With ſubmiſſion, we have, indeed, been ſolacing in lawful delights; but ſtill with an eye to buſineſs, Sir.

Mir. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

Foib. O, laſs, Sir, I'm ſo aſham'd!—I'm afraid, my lady has been in a thouſand inquietudes for me: but, I proteſt, Sir, I made as much haſte as I could.

Wait. That ſhe did indeed, Sir; it was my fault, that ſhe did not make more.

Foib. But I told my lady, as you inſtructed me, Sir, that I had a proſpect of ſeeing Sir Rowland, your uncle; and that I wou'd put her ladyſhip's picture in my

pocket, to ſhow him; which, I'll be ſure to ſay, has made him ſo enamour'd of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyſhip's feet, and worſhip the original.

Mir. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think, ſhe has profited, Sir,—I think ſo.

Foib. You have ſeen madam Millamant, Sir.

Mir. Yes.

Foib. I told her, Sir; becauſe I did not know that you might find an opportunity; ſhe had ſo much company laſt night.

Mir. Your diligence will merit more;—in the mean time,— [*Gives money.*

Foib. O, dear Sir, your humble ſervant.

Wait. Spouſe,——

Mir. Stand off, Sir; not a penny.—Go on, and proſper, Foible;—The leaſe ſhall be made good, and the farm ſtock'd, if we ſucceed.

Foib I don't queſtion your generoſity, Sir: and you need not doubt of ſucceſs. If you have no more commands, Sir, I'll begone; I'm ſure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dreſs, till I come.——O dear! I'm ſure, that [*looking out*] was Mrs. Marwood; if ſhe has ſeen me with you, I'm ſure, ſhe'll tell my lady. I'll make haſte home, and prevent her.—Your ſervant, Sir.—B'w'y, Waitwell.

Exit FOIBLE.

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you pleaſe.—The jade's ſo pert upon her preferment, ſhe forgets herſelf.

Mir Come, Sir, will you endeavour to forget yourſelf,—and transform into Sir Rowland?

Exit MIRABELL.

Wait. Why, Sir, it will be impoſſible, I ſhou'd remember myſelf---Marry'd, knighted, and attended, all in one day! 'Tis enough to make any man forget himſelf. The difficulty will be, how to recover my

acquaintance and familiarity with my former ſelf; and fall from my transformation, to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I ſhan't be quite the ſame Waitwell neither:---for, now I remember me, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own man again:

Ay, there's my grief, that's the ſad change of life;
To loſe my title, and yet keep my wife.

Exit.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE.—A ROOM IN LADY WISHFORT'S HOUSE.

Lady WISHFORT *discover'd at her Toilet, and* PEG *waiting.*

Lady. MERCIFUL!---no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

Lady. I have no more patience.—If I have not fretted myself, till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me.—Fetch me the red,—the red,—do you hear?—sweet-heart?—An errant ash-colour, as I'm a person.—Look you, how this wench stirs!—Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, mopus?

Peg. The red ratafia does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

Lady. Ratafia, fool! No, fool, not the ratafia, fool.——Grant me patience!—I mean the Spanish paper, idiot,—complexion, darling,—paint, paint, paint.—Dost thou understand that, changeling? dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee!—Why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires!

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient.---I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has lock'd it up, and carry'd the key with her.

Lady. A plague take you both!---Fetch me the cherry-brandy, then.

Exit PEG.

Lady. I'm as pale, and as faint,—I look like Mrs Qualmſick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding.—Wench,—come, come, wench.—What art thou doing? Sipping? taſting?—Save thee! doſt thou not know the bottle?

Re-enter PEG, *with a Bottle and a China Cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady. A cup? ſave thee!—And what a cup haſt thou brought! Doſt thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didſt thou not bring thy thimble? Haſt thou ne'er a braſs thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee.—Come, fill, fill.—(*She drinks.*)—So,—again.—(*One knocks.*)—See who that is. Set down the bottle firſt.—Here, here, under the table.—What! wou'dſt thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapſter?

Exit PEG.

As I'm a perſon, this wench has liv'd in an inn upon the road, before ſhe came to me, like Maritornes, the Aſturian, in Don Quixote.

Re-enter PEG.

No Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam;—Mrs. Marwood.

Enter MARWOOD.

Mar. I'm ſurpris'd, to find your ladyſhip in deſhabille at this time of day.

Lady. Foible's a loſt thing; has been abroad ſince morning, and never heard of ſince.

Mar. I ſaw her but now, as I came through the Park, in conference with Mirabell.

Lady. With Mirabell? You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durſt not have the confidence. I ſent her to negotiate an

affair, in which if I'm detected, I'm undone: If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruin'd: O, my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches, if I'm detected.

Mar. O, madam, you cannot ſuſpect Mrs. Foible's integrity.

Lady. O, he carries poiſon in his tongue, that wou'd corrupt integrity itſelf. If ſhe has given him an opportunity, ſhe has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?—*(One rings at the door.)*---Hark! I hear her.—Go, you thing, and ſend her in.

Exit PEG.

Dear friend, retire into my cloſet, that I may examine her with more freedom.---You'll pardon me, dear friend; I can make bold with you.---There are books over the chimney,---Quarles and Pryn,---and the Short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's Works,---to entertain you.

Exit MARWOOD.

Enter FOIBLE.

Lady. O, Foible, where haſt thou been? what haſt thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have ſeen the party.

Lady. But what haſt thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your ladyſhip has done, and are to do; I have only promis'd.---But a man ſo enamour'd, ſo tranſported!---Well, if worſhipping of pictures be a ſin,—poor Sir Rowland!—I ſay.

Lady. The miniature has been counted like.——But haſt thou not betray'd me, Foible? Haſt thou not detected me to that faithleſs Mirabell?---What hadſt thou to do with him in the Park?---Anſwer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. (Aſide.) So, the devil has been before-hand with me.---What ſhall I ſay?---Alas, madam, cou'd I

help it, if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your ladyſhip's account, I'm ſure, you wou'd not ſuſpect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worſt, I cou'd have borne: but he had a fling at your ladyſhip too; and then I cou'd not hold:---But, i'faith, I gave him his own.

Lady. Me?—What did the filthy fellow ſay?

Foib. O, madam, 'tis a ſhame to ſay what he ſaid.—With his taunts, and his ſleers, toſſing up his noſe,—Humph, (ſays he) what, you are hatching ſome plot, (ſays he) you are ſo early abroad;—or catering, (ſays he) ferreting for ſome diſbanded officer, I warrant;—half pay is but thin ſubſiſtence, (ſays he)——Well, what penſion does your lady propoſe? Let me ſee, (ſays he) what, ſhe muſt come down pretty deep now, ſhe's ſuperannuated, (ſays he) and——

Lady. Ods my life! I'll have him—I'll have him murder'd: I'll have him poiſon'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer, to have him poiſon'd in his wine.

Foib. Poiſon him? Poiſoning's too good for him; Starve him, madam, ſtarve him: Marry Sir Rowland, and get him diſinherited. O, you wou'd bleſs yourſelf, to hear what he ſaid!

Lady. A villain!—ſuperannuated!

Foib. Humph, (ſays he) I hear, you are laying deſigns againſt me too, (ſays he) and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle;—(he does not ſuſpect a word of your ladyſhip;)—but, (ſays he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you, (ſays he) I'll hamper you for that, (ſays he) you and your old frippery too, (ſays he) I'll handle you, (ſays he)——

Lady. Audacious villain! Handle me? 'Wou'd he durſt.——Frippery! old frippery!—Was there ever ſuch a foul-mouth'd fellow? I'll be marry'd to-morrow,—I'll be contracted to-night,——

Foib. The ſooner the better, madam,

Lady. Will Sir Rowland be here, ſay'ſt thou? When, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, madam. No new ſheriff's wife expects the return of her huſband after knighthood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kiſſing your ladyſhip's hand after dinner.

Lady. Frippery! ſuperannnated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags: a tatterdemallion!—I hope to ſee him hung with tatters, like a Long-lane penthouſe, or a gibbet-thief.—A ſlander-mouth'd railer!—I warrant, the ſpendthrift prodigal's in debt, as much as the whole court upon a birth-day. I'll ſpoil his credit with his taylor.—Yes, he ſhall have my niece with her fortune, he ſhall!—

Foib He? I hope to ſee him lodge in Ludgate firſt, and angle into Black-Fryars for braſs farthings with an old mitten.

Lady. Ay, dear Foible:—Thank thee for that, dear Foible!—He has put me out of all patience: I ſhall never recompoſe my features, to receive Sir Rowland with any œconomy of face: This wretch has fretted me, that I am abſolutely decay'd:—Look, Foible.

Foib. Your ladyſhip has frown'd a little too raſhly, indeed, madam: There are ſome cracks diſcernible in the white varniſh.

Lady. Let me ſee the glaſs.—Cracks, ſay'ſt thou? Why, I am arrantly flay'd,—I look like an old peel'd wall.—Thou muſt repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes; or I ſhall never keep up to my picture.

Foib. I warrant you, madam: A little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the ſame art muſt make you like your picture: Your picture muſt fit for you, madam. *(Paints Lady* WISHFORT.)

Lady. But art thou ſure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will he not fail, when he does come?

Will he be importunate, Foible? For, if he ſhou'd not be importunate,—I ſhall never break decorums,—I ſhall die with confuſion, if I am forc'd to advance:—O, no, I can never advance,—I ſhall ſwoon, if he ſhould expect advances.—No, I hope, Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the neceſſity of breaking her forms.—I won't be too coy neither; I won't give him deſpair:—But a little diſdain is not amiſs; a little ſcorn is alluring.

Foib. A little ſcorn becomes your ladyſhip.

Lady. Yes; but tenderneſs becomes me beſt,—a ſort of a dyingneſs:—You ſee, that picture has a ſort of—ha, Foible?—a ſwimmingneſs in the eyes.—Yes, I'll look ſo:—My niece affects it; but ſhe wants features.—Is Sir Rowland handſome? Is he handſome?—Don't anſwer me; I won't know: I'll be ſurpriz'd; I'll be taken by ſurprize.

Foib. By ſtorm, madam;—Sir Rowland's a briſk man.

Lady. Is he? O, then, he'll importune, if he's a briſk man. I ſhall ſave decorums, if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehenſion of offending againſt decorums.—I'll dreſs above.—I had forgot; my nephew will be here before dinner.—I muſt make haſte.

Foib. Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyſhip.

Lady. O dear; I can't appear till I'm dreſs'd.—Let my things be remov'd, good Foible.—O, I'm glad he's a briſk man!

Exit Lady WISHFORT.

Enter Mrs. FAINALL.

Mrs. *Fain.* O, Foible, I have been in a fright, leſt I ſhou'd come too late. That devil, Marwood, ſaw you in the Park with Mirabell, and, I'm afraid, will diſcover it to my lady.

Foib. Diſcover!—Diſcover what, madam?

Mrs. *Fain.* Nay, nay, put not on that ſtrange face: I am privy to the whole deſign, and know, that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning marry'd, is to perſonate Mirabell's uncle, Sir Rowland, and, as ſuch, winning my lady, to involve her in thoſe diſficulties, from which Mirabell only muſt releaſe her, by his making his conditions to have my couſin and her fortune left to her own diſpoſal.

Foib. O, dear madam, I beg your pardon:---It was not my confidence in your ladyſhip that was deficient; but, I thought, the former good correſpondence between your ladyſhip and Mr. Mirabell, might have hinder'd his communicating this ſecret.

Mrs. *Fain.* Dear Foible, forget that.

Foib. O, dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is ſuch a ſweet winning gentleman,---but your ladyſhip is the pattern of generoſity. Sweet lady, to be ſo good! Mr. Mirabell cannot chuſe but be grateful: I find, your ladyſhip has his heart ſtill.---Now, madam, I can ſafely tell your ladyſhip our ſucceſs,—Mrs. Marwood had told my lady; but, I warrant, I manag'd myſelf: I turn'd it all for the better: I told my lady, that Mr. Mirabell had rail'd at her; I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is ſo incens'd, that ſhe'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, ſhe ſays;—I warrant, I work'd her up, that he may have her for aſking for.

Mrs. *Fain.* O rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your ladyſhip to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his ſucceſs. I would be ſeen as little as poſſible to ſpeak to him;—Beſides, I believe, madam Marwood watches me:—She has a month's mind; but, I know, Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—Madam, your ſervant. My lady is ſo impatient, I fear, ſhe'll come for me, if I ſtay.

Mrs. *Fain.* I'll go with you up the back ſtairs, leſt I ſhou'd meet her.

Exeunt.

Re-enter MARWOOD.

Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. My friend Fainall, have you carry'd it so swimmingly? Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he can't abide her!—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair; unless you could have kept his counsel closer.

Enter MILLAMANT *and* MINCING.

Mill. Sure, never any thing was so unbred as that odious man!—Marwood, your servant.

Mar. You have a colour:—What's the matter?

Mill. That horrid fellow Petulant, has provok'd me into a flame:—I have broke my fan;—Mincing, lend me yours:—Is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mar. No. What has he done?

Mill. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd:—Nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted every thing that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he wou'd have quarrel'd.

Minc. I vow, mem, I thought once they'd have fitt.

Mill. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of chusing one's acquaintance, as one does one's cloaths.

Mar. If you'd but appear barefac'd now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud, as your hat and cloak:—And, indeed, 'tis time; for the town has found it.

Mill. I'll take my death, Marwood, you're more censorious than a decay'd beauty, or a discarded toast.—Mincing, tell the men they may come up;—

Exit MINCING.

My aunt is not dressing here.—Their folly is less pro-

voking than your malice.—The town has found it! What has it found?—That Mirabell loves me, is no more a ſecret, than it is a ſecret, that you diſcover'd it to my aunt; or than the reaſon why you diſcover'd it, is a ſecret.

Mar. You are nettl'd.

Mill You're miſtaken.—Ridiculous!

Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate thoſe violent airs.

Mill. O ſilly! Ha, ha, ha! I cou'd laugh immoderately.—Poor Mirabell! his conſtancy to me has quite deſtroy'd his complaiſance for all the world beſide. I ſwear, I never enjoin'd it him, to be ſo coy:—If I had the vanity, to think he wou'd obey me, I wou'd command him to ſhow more gallantry:—'tis hardly well bred, to be ſo particular on one hand, and ſo inſenſible on the other: But I deſpair to prevail, and ſo let him follow his own way.—Ha, ha, ha!—Pardon me, dear creature, I muſt laugh;—Ha, ha, ha!---tho', I grant you, 'tis a little barbarous,---Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impoſſible, when I ſhall tell him, by telling you,——

Mill. O dear, what?—for it is the ſame thing, if I hear it.---Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. That I deteſt him, hate him, madam.

Mill. O, madam, why ſo do I:---and yet the creature loves me:---Ha, ha, ha!---How can one forbear laughing to think of it?---I am a ſybil, if I am not amaz'd, to think what he can ſee in me. I'll take my death, I think, you are handſomer,---and, within a year or two, as young.

Mar. Your merry note may be chang'd ſooner than you think.

Mill. D'ye ſay ſo?---But here come the gentlemen----

Enter WITWOUD *and* PETULANT.

Is your animoſity compos'd, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam;---we have no animoſity;---we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animoſity:---The falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers:——We agree in the main, like treble and baſs---Ha, Petulant?

Pet. Ay, in the main:---But, when I have a humour to contradict,---

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too:---What, I know my cue:---then we contradict one another like two battle-dores; for contradictions beget one another, like Jews.

Pet. If he ſays, black's black,---if I have a humour to ſay, 'tis blue,---let that paſs---all's one for that:---If I have a humour to prove it, it muſt be granted.

Wit. Not poſitively muſt;---but it may,---it may.

Pet. Yes, it poſitively muſt, upon proof poſitive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof poſitive, it muſt; but, upon proof preſumptive, it only may:---that's a logical diſtinction now, madam.

Mar. I perceive, your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I aſſert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mar. That's a ſign, indeed, 'tis no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no; it's no enemy to any body, but them that have it.

Mill. Well, an illiterate man's my averſion; I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That, I confeſs, I wonder at too.

Mill. Ah! to marry an ignorant, that can hardly read or write!

Pet. Why ſhould a man be any further from being marry'd, tho' he can't read, than he is from being hang'd? The ordinary's paid for ſetting the pſalm, and the pariſh prieſt for reading the ceremony:---So, all's one for that.

Mill. D'ye hear the creature? Lord, here's company; I'll be gone.

Exit MILLAMANT.

Wit. In the name of Bartlemew and his fair, what have we here?

Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy; Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I;---Yes, I think, it is he:---I've almoſt forgot him; I have not ſeen him theſe ten years.

Enter Sir WILFULL WITWOUD *in a Riding-dreſs, and* THOMAS.

Thomas. Sir, my lady's dreſſing.---Here's company; if you pleaſe to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir *Wil.* Dreſſing!---What, it's but morning here, I warrant, with you in London; we ſhou'd count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropſhire.---Why, then, belike, my aunt han't din'd yet,---ha, friend?

Thom. Your aunt, Sir?

Sir *Wil.* My aunt, Sir? Yes, my aunt, Sir; and your lady, Sir: Your lady is my aunt, Sir.---Why, what, doſt thou not know me, friend?---Why, then, ſend ſomebody hither that does.---How long haſt thou liv'd with thy lady, fellow, ha?

Thom. A week, Sir; longer than any body in the houſe, except my lady's woman.

Sir *Wil.* Why, then, belike, thou doſt not know thy lady, if thou ſee'ſt her, ha,—friend?

Thom. Why, truely, Sir, I cannot ſafely ſwear to her face in a morning, before ſhe is dreſs'd: 'Tis like, I may give a ſhrewd gueſs at her, by this time.

Sir *Wil.* Well, pr'ythee, try what thou can'ſt do:—if thou can'ſt not gueſs, enquire her out,—do'ſt hear, fellow?—And tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud is in the houſe.

Thom. I ſhall, Sir. *(Going.)*

Sir *Wil.* Hold ye,—hear me, friend:—a word with you in your ear.—Pr'ythee, who are theſe gallants?

Thom. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come ſo many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all.

Exit THOMAS.

Sir *Wil.* Oons, this fellow knows leſs than a ſtarling; I don't think, a'knows his own name.

Mar. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behind hand in forgetfulneſs:—I fancy, he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope ſo:—The devil take him that remembers firſt, I ſay.

Sir *Wil.* Save you, gentlemen, and lady.

Mar. For ſhame, Mr. Witwoud! Why won't you ſpeak to him?—And you, Sir,

Wit. Petulant, ſpeak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir *Wil.* No offence, I hope, [*Salutes* Marwood.

Mar. No ſure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog; I ſee that already.—No offence!—Ha, ha, ha!—To him, to him, Petulant; —ſmoke him.

Pet. It ſeems, as if you had come a journey, Sir,—hem, hem! [*Surveying him round.*

Sir *Wil.* Very likely, Sir, that it may ſeem ſo.

Pet. No offence, I hope, Sir.

Sir *Wil.* May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots; the boots, Petulant, the boots;—Ha, ha, ha!

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir *Wil.* Why, 'tis like, you may, Sir: if you are not satisfy'd with the information of my boots, Sir;—if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of my horse, Sir.

Pet. Your horse, Sir! Your horse is an ass, Sir.

Sir *Wil.* Do you speak by way of offence, Sir?

Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir.—'Slife, we shall have a quarrel betwixt a horse and an ass, before they find one another out.—You must not take any thing amiss from your friends, Sir: You are among your friends here; tho', it may be, you don't know it:—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir *Wil.* Right, lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud,—so I write myself; no offence to any body, I hope;—and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, Sir?

Sir *Wil.* Hum!—What, sure, 'tis not—Yea, by'r lady, but 'tis.—'Sheart, I know not whether 'tis, or no.—Yea, but 'tis, by the Rekin.—Brother Antony! What, Tony, i'faith!—What, do'st thou not know me? By'r lady, nor I thee; thou art so belac'd, and so bepowder'd.—'Sheart, why do'st not speak? Art thou o'erjoy'd?

Wit. Odso, brother, is it you? Your servant, brother.

Sir *Wil.* Your servant! Why, yours, Sir;—your servant again;—'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that;—and a—*(puff)*, and a flap-dragon, for your service, Sir; and a hare's foot, for your service, Sir; an you be so cold, and so courtly.

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much offence.—A plague, is this your inns o' court breeding? not to know your friends, and your relations, your elders, and your betters!

Wit. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as ſhort as a Shrewſbury cake, if you pleaſe; but, I tell you, 'tis not modiſh, to know relations in town: You think, you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers ſlabber and kiſs one another, when they meet, like a call of ſerjeants:---'Tis not the faſhion here; 'tis not, indeed, dear brother.

Sir *Wil.* The faſhion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother.---'Sheart, I've ſuſpected this:---By'r lady, I conjectur'd you were a fop, ſince you began to change the ſtile of your letters, and write in a ſcrap of paper, gilt round the edges, no bigger than a ſubpæna. I might expect this, when you left off---*Honoured brother*,---and *Hoping you are in good health*,---and ſo forth,---to begin with a---*Rat me, knight, I'm ſo ſick of a laſt night's debauch*---O'ds heart!---and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a wench and a bottle, and ſo conclude.---You cou'd write news, before you were out of your time, when you liv'd with honeſt Pumple-Noſe, the attorney of Furnival's inn.---We could have the Gazette, and Evening Papers then.---You cou'd entreat to be remember'd then to your friends round the Rekin.

Pet. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? Of the family of the Furnivals!---Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay; but that was but for a while.---Not long, not long.---Pſhaw! I was not in my own power then; an orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to conſent to that, man, to come to London: He had the diſpoſal of me then; if I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewſbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, and better, than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I ſuppoſe, you have ſerv'd your time; and now, you may ſet up for yourſelf.

Mar. You intend to travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir *Wil.* Belike, I may, madam: I may chance to ſail upon the ſalt ſeas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind ſerve.

Sir *Wil.* Serve, or not ſerve, I ſhan't aſk licence of you, Sir; nor the weather-cock your companion. I direct my diſcourſe to the lady, Sir:---'Tis like, my aunt may have told you, madam:---Yes, I have ſettled my concerns, I may ſay, now; and am minded to ſee foreign parts; if an how that the peace holds, whereby, that is, taxes abate.

Mar. I thought, you had deſigned for France, at all adventures.

Sir *Wil.* I can't tell that: 'Tis like, I may; and 'tis like, I may not. I am ſomewhat dainty in making a reſolution; becauſe, when I make it, I keep it. I don't ſtand ſhill I, ſhall I, then; if I ſay't, I'll do't: But I have thoughts, to tarry a ſmall matter in town, to learn ſomewhat of your lingo firſt, before I croſs the ſeas. I'd gladly have a ſpice of your French, as they ſay, whereby to hold diſcourſe in foreign countries.

Mar. Here's an academy in town for that uſe.

Sir *Wil.* There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mar. No doubt, you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd,---like a Dutch ſkipper from a whale-fiſhing.

Enter MINCING *and* FAINALL.

(MARWOOD *and* FAINALL *talk apart.*)

Minc. Gentlemen, I come to acquaint you, that dinner is impatient.

Sir *Wil.* Impatient?---Why, then, belike, it won't ſtay, 'till I pull off my boots.---Sweet-heart, can you help me to a pair of ſlippers?—My man's with his horſes, I warrant.

Minc. Fie, fie, Sir!—You wou'd not pull off your

boots here?—Go down into the hall, and call for one of the footmen,

Sir *Wil.* Ay, ay; any where, any where.

Exeunt MINCING, Sir WILFULL, PETULANT, *and* WITWOUD.

Fain. Why, then, Foible's a procureſs, an arrant, rank, match-making procureſs:—and I, it ſeems, am a huſband, a rank huſband;—and my wife, a very arrant, rank wife;—all in the Way of the World.—'Sdeath, to be out-witted, to be out-jilted, out-matrimony'd!—'Tis ſcurvy wedlock!

Mar. Then ſhake it off:—You have often wiſh'd for an opportunity to part, and now you have it. But, firſt, prevent their plot,—the half of Millamant's fortune is too conſiderable to be parted with,—to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. That had been mine, had you not made that fond diſcovery; that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added luſtre to my horns by that increaſe of fortune; I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with gold, though my forehead had been furniſh'd like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you ſtill, if you can away with your wife. You married her, to keep you; and, if you can contrive to have her keep you, better than you expected; why ſhould you not keep her, longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means?

Mar. Diſcover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her: My lady loves her; and will come to any compoſition, to ſave her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, juſt upon the diſcovery of this impoſture: My lady will be enrag'd beyond bounds; and ſacrifice niece, and fortune, and all, at that conjuncture.—And let me alone to keep her

warm; if ſhe ſhou'd flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. 'Faith, this has an appearance.

Mar. I'm ſorry, I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull; that may be an obſtacle.

Fain. O, for that matter, leave me to manage him; I'll diſable him for that:—He will drink like a Dane; after dinner, I'll ſet his hand in.—Well, how do we proceed?

Mar. I will contrive a letter, which ſhall be delivered to my lady, at the time when that raſcal, who is to act Sir Rowland, is with her. It ſhall come as from an unknown hand; for, the leſs I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Beſides, I wou'd not have Foible provok'd, if I could help it; becauſe, you know, ſhe knows ſome paſſages,—Nay, I expect all will come out: But, let the mine be ſprung firſt; and then I care not, if I am diſcover'd.

Fain. If the worſt come to the worſt,—I'll turn my wife to graſs.---I have already a deed of ſettlement of the beſt part of her eſtate, which I wheedl'd out of her; and that you ſhall partake, at leaſt.

Mar. I hope, you are convinced, that I hate Mirabell now.---You'll be no more jealous?

Fain. Jealous! no,---by this kiſs.---Let huſbands be jealous; but let the lover ſtill believe. I am ſingle, and will herd no more with 'em.---True, I wear the badge; but I'll diſown the order:---And, ſince I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common creſt.

All huſbands muſt, or pain, or ſhame, endure;
The wiſe too jealous are, fools too ſecure.

Exeunt.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE CONTINUES.

Enter Lady WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

Lady. IS Sir Rowland coming, ſay'ſt thou, Foible? and are things in order?

Foib. Yes, madam. I have put wax-lights in the ſconces; and plac'd the footmen in a row in the hall, in their beſt liveries, with the coachman and poſtillion to fill up the equipage.

Lady. Have you pulvill'd the coachman and poſtillion, that they may not ſmell of the ſtable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, madam.

Lady. And—well—and how do I look, Foible?

Foib. Moſt killing well, madam.

Lady. Well, and how ſhall I receive him? In what figure ſhall I give his heart the firſt impreſſion? There is a great deal in the firſt impreſſion. Shall I ſit?—No, I won't ſit:—I'll walk,—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance, and then turn full upon him.—No, that will be too ſudden.—I'll lye,—ay, I'll lye down.—I'll receive him in my little dreſſing-room; there's a couch:—Yes, yes; I'll give the firſt impreſſion on a couch.—I won't lye neither; but loll, and lean upon one elbow; with one foot a little dangling off, jogging, in a thoughtful way.—Yes,—and then, as ſoon as he appears, ſtart; ay, ſtart, and be ſurpris'd; and riſe to meet him, in a pretty diſorder.—Yes,—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in ſome confuſion;—it ſhows the foot to advantage, and furniſhes with

bluſhes, and re-compoſing airs, beyond compariſon. —Hark! there's a coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, madam.

Lady. O dear, has my nephew made his addreſſes to Millamant? I order'd him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is ſet in to drinking, madam, in the parlour.

Lady. Ods my life, I'll ſend him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither; I'll ſend him, as I go.—When they are together, then come to me, Foible; that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland.

Exit Lady WISHFORT.

Enter MILLAMANT *and* Mrs. FAINALL.

Foib. Madam, I ſtay'd here, to tell your ladyſhip, that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half hour, for an opportunity to talk with you:—tho' my lady's orders were, to leave you and Sir Wilfull together.—Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell, that you are at leiſure?

Mill. No.—What wou'd the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and wou'd amuſe myſelf:---Bid him come another time.

There never yet was woman made,
Nor ſhall, but to be curs'd,——

Repeating and walking about.

That's hard!

Mrs. *Fain.* You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

Mill. Hey? ay, and filthy verſes:—So I am.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I ſend Mr. Mirabell away?

Mill. Ay, if you pleaſe, Foible;—ſend him away, —or ſend him hither,—juſt as you will, dear Foible. —I think, I'll ſee him.—Shall I? Ay, let the wretch come.

Exit FOIBLE.

—Thyrſis, a youth of the inſpired train,—*(Repeating.)* Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull:---Thou haſt philoſophy to undergo a fool; thou art marry'd, and haſt patience:---I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. *Fain.* I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have buſineſs of my own.

Enter Sir WILFULL.

Mrs. *Fain.* O, Sir Wilfull, you are come at the critical inſtant. There's your miſtreſs up to the ears in love and contemplation; purſue your point, now or never.

Sir *Wil.* Yes; my aunt will have it ſo.---I would gladly have been encourag'd with a bottle or two, becauſe I'm ſomewhat wary at firſt, before I'm acquainted;—[*This while* MILLAMANT *walks about repeating to herſelf.*]—but, I hope, after a time, I ſhall break my mind,---that is, upon further acquaintance:---So, for the preſent, couſin, I'll take my leave:---If ſo be, you'll be ſo kind to make my excuſe, I'll return to my company.

Mrs. *Fain.* O fie, Sir Wilfull! What, you muſt not be daunted.

Sir *Wil.* Daunted!---no, that's not it; it is not ſo much for that;---for, if ſo be that I ſet on't, I'll do't;---but only, for the preſent, 'tis ſufficient, till further acquaintance; that's all.—Your ſervant.

Mrs. *Fain.* Nay, I'll ſwear, you ſhall never loſe ſo favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door.

Exit Mrs. FAINALL.

Sir *Wil.* Nay, nay, couſin,——I have forgot my gloves.—What d'ye do? 'Sheart, a' has lock'd the door indeed, I think.---Nay, couſin Fainall, open

the door.---Pſhaw! what a vixen trick is this!---Nay, now a' has ſeen me too.---Couſin, I made bold to paſs thro', as it were.---I think, this door's enchanted.

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

I pr'ythee, ſpare me, gentle boy;
Preſs me me no more for that ſlight toy,——

Sir *Wil.* Anan?—Couſin, your ſervant.

Mill. (*Repeating.*) That fooliſh trifle of a heart,—Sir Wilfull!

Sir *Wil.* Yes,---your ſervant.---No offence, I hope, couſin.

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

I ſwear, it will not do its part,
Tho' thou doſt thine, employ'ſt thy power and art.

Natural, eaſy, Suckling!

Sir *Wil.* Anan?---Suckling! No ſuch ſuckling neither, couſin, nor ſtripling: I thank heaven, I'm no minor.

Mill. Ah, ruſtick! ruder than Gothick!——

Sir *Wil.* Well, well, I ſhall underſtand your lingo one of theſe days, couſin; in the mean while, I muſt anſwer in plain Engliſh.

Mill. Have you any buſineſs with me, Sir Wilfull?

Sir *Wil.* Not at preſent, couſin.---Yes, I made bold to ſee,---to come, and know,---if that how you were diſpos'd to fetch a walk this evening; if ſo be that I might not be troubleſome, I would have fought a walk with you.

Mill. A walk! what then?

Sir *Wil.* Nay, nothing,---only for the walk's ſake, that's all.

Mill. I nauſeate walking; 'tis a country diverſion; I loath the country, and every thing that relates to it.

Sir *Wil.* Indeed!—Hah!—Look ye, look ye!—You do? Nay, 'tis like, you may:—Here are choice

of paſtimes here in town, as plays and the like, that muſt be confeſs'd, indeed.

Mill. Ah, *l'etourdi!*—I hate the town too.

Sir *Wil.* Dear heart, that's much.—Hah!---That you ſhou'd hate 'em both!---Hah!---'Tis like, you may; there are ſome can't reliſh the town, and others can't away with the country:---'Tis like, you may be one of thoſe, couſin.

Mill. Ha, ha, ha!---Yes, 'tis like, I may.---You have nothing further to ſay to me?

Sir *Wil.* Not at preſent, couſin.---'Tis like, when I have an opportunity to be more private, I may break my mind in ſome meaſure.---I conjecture, you partly gueſs,---However, that's as time ſhall try:---But, ſpare to ſpeak, and ſpare to ſpeed, as they ſay.

Mill. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me; I have juſt now a little buſineſs.

Sir *Will.* Enough, enough, couſin,---yes, yes, all a caſe,——when you're diſpos'd, when you're diſpos'd,---now's as well as another time, and another time as well as now,---all's one for that.---Yes, yes; if your concerns call you, there's no haſte; it will keep cold, as they ſay.---Couſin, your ſervant.---I think, this door's lock'd,——

Mill. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir *Wil.* Your ſervant,---then, with your leave, I'll return to my company.

Exit Sir WILFULL.

Mill. Ay, ay.---Ha, ha, ha!

(Repeating.)

Like Phœbus ſung the no leſs am'rous boy,——

Enter MIRABELL.

Mir. Like Daphne ſhe, as lovely, and as coy.
Do you lock yourſelf up from me, to make my ſearch

more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contriv'd, to ſignify, that here the chaſe muſt end, and my purſuit be crown'd; for you can fly no further?

Mill. Vanity!—I'll fly, and be follow'd to the laſt moment: tho' I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you ſhould ſolicit me, as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monaſtery, with one foot over the threſhold. I'll be ſolicited to the very laſt; nay, and afterwards.

Mir. What, after the laſt?

Mill. O, I hate a lover, that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his miſtreſs. There is not ſo impudent a thing in nature, as the ſaucy look of an aſſur'd man, confident of ſucceſs. The pedantic arrogance of a very huſband, has not ſo pragmatical an air.—Ah! I'll never marry, unleſs I am firſt made ſure of my will and pleaſure.

Mir. Would you have 'em both before marriage? Or, will you be contented with the firſt now, and ſtay for the other till after grace?

Mill. Ah, don't be impertinent.—My dear liberty, ſhall I leave thee? My faithful ſolitude, my darling contemplation, muſt I bid you then adieu? Ay-h, adieu!—My morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent ſlumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *ſommeils du matin*, adieu!—I can't do't, 'tis more than impoſſible.—Poſitively, Mirabell, I'll lie a-bed in a morning, as long as I pleaſe.

Mir. Then, I'll get up in a morning, as early as I pleaſe.

Mill. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will.—And,—d'ye hear?—I won't be call'd names, after I'm marry'd; poſitively, I won't be call'd names.

Mir. Names!

Mill. Ay; as wife, ſpouſe, my dear, joy, jewel, love, ſweet-heart, and the reſt of that nauſeous cant, in which men and their wives are ſo fulſomely fami-

liar: I ſhall never bear that.—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar, or fond;—nor kiſs before folks, like my lady Fadler and Sir Francis;—nor go to Hyde-Park together the firſt Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whiſpers; and then never be ſeen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the firſt week, and aſham'd of one another ever after.—Let us never viſit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very ſtrange, and well bred: let us be as ſtrange, as if we had been marry'd a great while; and as well bred, as if we were not marry'd at all.

Mir. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto, your demands are pretty reaſonable.

Mill. Trifles;—as liberty to pay, and receive, viſits to, and from, whom I pleaſe; to write, and receive, letters, without interrogatories, or wry faces, on your part; to wear what I pleaſe; and chuſe converſation with regard only to my own taſte; to have no obligation upon me to converſe with wits that I don't like, becauſe they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, becauſe they may be your relations; come to dinner, when I pleaſe; dine in my dreſſing-room, when I'm out of humour, without giving a reaſon; to have my cloſet inviolate; to be ſole empreſs of my tea-table, which you muſt never preſume to approach, without firſt aſking leave; and, laſtly, where-ever I am, you ſhall always knock at the door, before you come in.—Theſe articles ſubſcrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may, by degrees, dwindle into a wife.

Mir. Your bill of fare is ſomewhat advanc'd in this latter account.—Well, have I liberty to offer conditions?—that, when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be, beyond meaſure, enlarg'd into a huſband.

Mill. You have free leave; propoſe your utmoſt; ſpeak, and ſpare not.

Mir. I thank you.—Imprimis then, I covenant, that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no ſworn confident, or intimate of your own ſex; no ſhe friend, to ſkreen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual ſecreſy; no decoy duck, to wheedle you a fop-ſcrambling to the play,—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you ſhall be found out,—and rail at me, for miſſing the play, and diſappointing the frolick which you had to pick me up, and prove my conſtancy.

Mill. Deteſtable imprimis!—I go to the play a fop-ſcrambling!—

Mir. Item I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I ſhall; and, while it paſſes current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it: to which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all maſks for the night, made of oil'd ſkins, hog's bones, hare's gall, and the marrow of a roaſted cat.—Item, when you ſhall be breeding,——

Mill. Ah! name it not.

Mir. I denounce againſt all ſtrait lacing, ſqueeſing for a ſhape, till you mould my boy's head like a ſugar-loaf; and, inſtead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked billet.—Laſtly, to the dominion of the tea-table I ſubmit;—but, with proviſo, that you exceed not in your province; but reſtrain yourſelf to native and ſimple tea-table drinks,—as tea, chocolate, and coffee: as likewiſe to genuine and authoris'd tea-table talk,—ſuch as mending of faſhions, ſpoiling reputations, railing at abſent friends, and ſo forth:—But that, on no account, you encroach upon the mens' prerogative, and preſume to drink healths, or toaſt fellows; for prevention of which, I baniſh all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table,—as orange-brandy,—all anniſeed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbado's waters,—together with

ratafia, and the moſt noble ſpirit of clary:—But, for cowſlip-wine, poppy-water, and all dormitives, thoſe I allow.—Theſe proviſos admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying huſband.

Mill. O horrid proviſos! filthy ſtrong waters! I toaſt fellows? odious men!—I hate your odious proviſos.

Mir. Then, we're agreed. Shall I kiſs your hand upon the contract? And here comes one, to be witneſs to the ſealing of the deed.

Enter Mrs. FAINALL.

Mill. Fainall, what ſhall I do? Shall I have him? I think, I muſt have him.

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, ay; take him, take him: What ſhou'd you do?

Mill. Well then,—I'll take my death, I'm in a horrid fright:—Fainall, I ſhall never ſay it:—Well,—I think,—I'll endure you.

Mrs. *Fain.* Fy, fy! Have him, have him; and tell him ſo in plain terms; for, I am ſure, you have a mind to him.

Mill. Are you? I think, I have:—And the horrid man looks, as if he thought ſo too.—Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you.—I won't be kiſs'd, nor I won't be thank'd.—Here, kiſs my hand tho'.—So, hold your tongue now, don't ſay a word.

Mrs. *Fain.* Mirabell, there's a neceſſity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk, nor ſtay; my mother is coming;—therefore ſpare your ecſtaſies for another occaſion, and ſlip down the back ſtairs, where Foible waits to conſult you.

Mill. Ay, go, go.—In the mean time, I ſuppoſe you have ſaid ſomething to pleaſe me.

Mir. I am all obedience.

Exit MIRABELL.

Mrs. *Fain.* Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk; and ſo noiſy, that my mother has been forc'd to leave Sir Rowland, to appeaſe him; but he anſwers her only with ſinging and drinking:—What they may have done by this time, I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarreling, as I came by.

Mill. Well, if Mirabell ſhould not make a good huſband, I am a loſt thing; for, I find, I love him violently.

Mrs. *Fain.* So it ſeems; for you mind not what's ſaid to you.—If you doubt him, you had beſt take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mill. How can you name that ſuperannuated lubber? foh!

Enter WITWOUD *from drinking.*

Mrs. *Fain.* So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could ſtay no longer.—I have laugh'd like ten chriſt'nings;—I am tipſy with laughing.—If I had ſtaid any longer, I ſhould have burſt; I muſt have been let out, and piec'd in the ſides like an unſiz'd camlet.—Yes, yes, the fray is compos'd; my lady came in like a *Noli proſequi*, and ſtopp'd the proceedings.

Mill. What was the diſpute?

Wit. That's the jeſt; there was no diſpute. They could neither of 'em ſpeak, for rage; and ſo fell a ſputt'ring at one another like two roaſting apples.

Enter PETULANT *drunk.*

Now, Petulant,—all's over, all's well?---'Gad, my head begins to whim it about.---Why doſt thou not ſpeak? Thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fiſh.

Pet Look you, Mrs. Millamant,---if you can love me, dear nymph,---ſay it,---and that's the concluſion:---paſs on, or paſs off,——that's all.

Wit. Thou haſt utter'd volumes, folios, in leſs than

decimo ſexto, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwoud,---you are an annihilator of ſenſe.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phraſes; and doſt deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincuſhions: ---thou art, in truth, metaphorically ſpeaking, a ſpeaker of ſhort-hand.

Pet. Thou art, without a figure, juſt one half of an aſs, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the reſt:---A gemini of aſſes ſplit, would make juſt four of you.

Wit. Thou doſt bite, my dear muſtard-ſeed:--- Kiſs me for that.

Pet. Stand off,—I'll kiſs no more of you:—I have kiſs'd your twin yonder, in a humour of reconciliation, till he *(hiccup)* riſes upon my ſtomach like a raddiſh.

Mill. Eh! filthy creature!—What was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel;—there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em, to have expreſs'd provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of caſtanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mill. Me!

Pet. If I have a humour to quarrel, I can make leſs matters conclude premiſes.—If you are not handſome;—what then, if I have a humour to prove it?—If I ſhall have my reward, ſay ſo; if not, fight for your face the next time yourſelf.—I'll go ſleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thyſelf up like a woodlouſe, and dream revenge.—And,—hear me,—if thou can'ſt learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge; I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your miſtreſs's monkey a ſpider,—go flea dogs, and read romances.—I'll go to bed to my maid. *Exit* PETULANT.

Mrs. *Fain.* He's horridly drunk.—How came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight: Your husband's advice; but he sneak'd off.

Enter Sir WILFULL *drunk, and* Lady WISHFORT.

Lady. Out upon't, out upon't! At years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate?

Sir *Wil.* No offence, aunt,—

Lady. Offence! As I'm a person, I'm asham'd of you.—D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a Borachio? You're an absolute Borachio.

Sir *Wil.* Borachio?

Lady. At a time, when you shou'd commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost,——

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, an you grudge me your liquor, make a bill:—Give me more drink, and take my purse.—But, if you wou'd have me marry my cousin, say the word, and I'll do't.—Wilfull will do't, that's the word.—Wilfull will do't, that's my crest,—my motto I have forgot.

Lady. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin; but 'tis with drinking your health:—O' my word, you are oblig'd to him.

Sir *Wil.* In vino veritas, aunt:—If I drunk your health to-day, cousin, I am a Borachio. But, if you have a mind to be marry'd, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't: if not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round.—Tony! Ods-heart, where's Tony?—Tony's an honest fellow; but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.

Sings.] We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys;
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys,
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk ev'ry night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The ſun's a good pimple, an honeſt ſoaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes:—If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes:—Your Antipodes are a good raſcally ſort of topſy turvy fellows:——If I had a bumper, I'd ſtand upon my head, and drink a health to 'em.——A match, or no match, couſin, with the hard name?—Aunt, Wilfull will do't.

Mill. Your pardon, madam, I can ſtay no longer; Sir Wilfull grows very powerful.—Egh! how he ſmells! I ſhall be overcome if I ſtay. Come, couſin.

Exeunt MILLAMANT *and* Mrs. FAINALL.

Lady. Smells!—He would poiſon a tallow-chandler and his family. Beaſtly creature! I know not what to do with him.—Travel, quoth-a? Ay, travel, travel; get thee gone,—get thee but far enough,—to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks;—for thou art not fit to live in a Chriſtian common-wealth, thou beaſtly Pagan.

Sir *Wil.* Turks? No; no Turks, aunt; your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape.

Enter FOIBLE, *and whiſpers* Lady WISHFORT.

—I cannot find by the map, that your Mufti is orthodox;—whereby it is a plain caſe, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and *(hiccup)* greek for claret.—Hey, Tony! where's Tony?

Lady. Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! What ſhall I do with this beaſtly tumbril?

Exit FOIBLE.

Go, lie down and ſleep, you ſot;—or, as I'm a perſon, I'll have you baſtinado'd with broom-ſticks.—Call up the wenches with broom-ſticks.

Sir *Wil.* Ahey! Wenches!—Where are the wenches?

Lady. Dear couſin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably,—I have an affair of moment that invades me with ſome precipitation,—you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight.—Plague on him! he has a breath like a bagpipe.—Come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir *Wil.* Lead on, little Tony.—I'll follow thee my Antony, my Tantony.—Sirrah, thou ſhalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig.

Sings.] That he's able next morning to light us.

Exeunt WITWOUD *and* Sir WILFULL.

Lady. This will never do; it will never make a match,——at leaſt, before he has been abroad.

Enter FOIBLE, *introducing* WAITWELL *diſguiſed, as for* Sir ROWLAND.

Foib. Sir Rowland, madam.

Exit FOIBLE.

Lady. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confuſion at the retroſpection of my own rudeneſs.—I have more pardons to aſk, than the pope diſtributes in the year of jubilee. But, I hope, where there is likely to be ſo near an alliance, we may unbend the ſeverity of decorum, and diſpenſe with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my tranſport; and, till I have poſſeſſion of your adorable perſon, I am tantaliz'd on the rack; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady. You have exceſs of gallantry, Sir Rowland; and preſs things to a concluſion with a moſt prevailing vehemence.——But, a day or two, for decency of marriage,——

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart; or, if that ſhould fail, I ſhall be poiſon'd. My nephew will get an inkling of my deſigns, and poiſon me;—and I would willingly ſtarve him, before I die;—I would gladly go out of the world with that ſatisfaction:—That would be ſome comfort to me, if I could but live ſo long, as to be reveng'd on that unnatural viper.

Lady. Is he ſo unnatural, ſay you? Truely, I would contribute much, both to the ſaving of your life, and the accompliſhment of your revenge:—Not that I reſpect myſelf; though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady. O, Sir Rowland, the hours that he has dy'd away at my feet,—the tears that he has ſhed, the oaths that he has ſworn! the palpitations that he has felt! the trances and the tremblings, the ardors and the ecſtacies! the kneelings and the riſings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings! the pangs and the pathetick regards of his proteſting eyes,—O, no memory can regiſter!

Wait. What, my rival! Is the rebel my rival? a' dies.

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland; ſtarve him,—gradually,—inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks, he ſhall be barefoot; in a month, out at knees with begging an alms; he ſhall ſtarve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out like a candle's end upon a ſave-all.

Lady. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way,—you are no novice in the labyrinth of love,—you have the clue.——But, as I am a perſon, Sir Rowland, you muſt not attribute my yielding to any ſiniſter appetite.

Wait. Far be it from me,——

Lady. If you do, I proteſt, I muſt recede;——nor think, that I have made a proſtitution of decorums, but in the vehemence of compaſſion, and to ſave the life of a perſon of ſo much importance.

Wait. I eſteem it ſo,—

Lady. Or elſe you wrong my condeſcenſion;—

Wait. I do not, I do not.

Lady. —indeed, you do.

Wait. I do not, fair ſhrine of virtue.—No; you

are all camphire and frankincenſe, all chaſtity and odour.

Lady. Or that—

Enter FOIBLE.

Foib. Madam, there's one with a letter, who muſt deliver it into your own hands.

Lady. What an interruption!—Sir Rowland, will you give me leave?—Think favourably, judge candidly: and conclude, you have found a perſon, who would ſuffer racks in honour's cauſe, dear Sir Rowland,—and will wait on you inceſſantly.

Exit Lady WISHFORT.

Wait. Fie, fie!—What a ſlavery have I undergone!—Spouſe, haſt thou any cordial? I want ſpirits.

Foib. What a poor rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and ſwearing to a fine lady!

Wait. O, ſhe is the antidote to deſire.—By this hand, I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days, than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow.

Re-enter Lady WISHFORT, *with a Letter in her hand.*

Lady. Now, with your permiſſion, Sir Rowland, I will peruſe my letter.—I would open it in your preſence, becauſe I would not make you uneaſy. If it ſhould make you uneaſy, I would burn it:—Speak, if it does:—But, you may ſee, the ſuperſcription is like a woman's hand.

Foib. By heav'n, Mrs. Marwood's! I know it.—Get it from her. [*To him.*

Wait. A woman's hand! No, madam, that's no woman's hand; I ſee that already: That's ſomebody whoſe throat muſt be cut.

Lady. Nay, Sir Rowland, ſince you give me a proof of your paſſion by your jealouſy, I promiſe you I'll make a return, by a frank communication.—

You ſhall ſee it;—we'll open it together;—look you here.

(Reads)—*Madam, though unknown to you,*—Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know.——*I have that honour for your character, that I think myſelf oblig'd to let you know, you are abus'd. He, who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a raſcal,*—— Oh heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate! all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how? Let me ſee, let me ſee.—(*Snatches the letter, and reads.*)—*a raſcal, and diſguis'd, and ſuborn'd, for that impoſture,*—O villainy! O villainy!—*by the contrivance of*—

Lady. I ſhall faint, I ſhall die, I ſhall die,—oh!

Foib. Say, 'tis your nephew's hand,—quickly,—his plot,—ſwear, ſwear it. [*To him.*

Wait. Here's a villain!—Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you ſee it?

Lady. Too well, too well.—I have ſeen too much.

Wait. I told you at firſt, I knew the hand.—A woman's hand!—The raſcal writes a ſort of a large hand; your Italian hand.—I ſaw, there was a throat to be cut preſently. If he were my ſon, as he is my nephew, I'd piſtol him.

Foib. O treachery!—But, are you ſure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure?—Am I here? Do I live? Do I love this pearl of India?—I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the ſame character.

Lady. How?

Foib. O, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were preſent at this juncture! This was the buſineſs that brought Mr. Mirabell, diſguis'd, to madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought, ſomething was contriving, when he ſtole by me, and would have hid his face.

Lady. How, how?—I heard, the villain was in the houſe, indeed; and, now I remember, my niece went

away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addreſſes.

Foib. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber: But I would not tell your ladyſhip, to diſcompoſe you, when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough; his date is ſhort.

Foib. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cauſe.—My lady ſhall be ſatisfy'd of my truth and innocence, tho' it coſt me my life.

Lady. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you ſhould be kill'd, I muſt never ſhow my face:—O, conſider my reputation, Sir Rowland:—I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

Wait. I am charm'd, madam; I obey. But, ſome proof you muſt let me give you.—I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole eſtate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be ſome comfort; bring the black box.

Wait. And may I preſume to bring a contract to be ſign'd this night? May I hope ſo far?

Lady. Bring what you will; but come alive; 'pray, come alive.

Wait. Dead or alive, I'll come;—and married we will be in ſpight of treachery;—ay, and get an heir that ſhall defeat the laſt remaining glimpſe of hope in my abandon'd nephew. Come, my buxom widow:

Ere long, you ſhall ſubſtantial proof receive,
That I'm an arrant knight,——

Foib. Or arrant knave.

Exeunt.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE CONTINUES.

Enter FOIBLE *and Lady* WISHFORT.

Lady. OUT of my houſe, out of my houſe, thou viper, thou ſerpent, that I have foſter'd!—thou boſom traitreſs, that I rais'd from nothing!—begone, begone, begone; go, go:—that I took from waſhing of old gauze, and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue noſe, over a chafing diſh of ſtarv'd embers!—and dining behind a traver's rag, in a ſhop no bigger than a bird cage!—go, go, ſtarve again, do, do!

Foib. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady. Away; out, out; go, ſet up for yourſelf again, do;—drive a trade, do, with your three-penny worth of ſmall ware, flaunting upon a pack-thread, under a brandy-ſeller's bulk, or againſt a dead wall by a ballad-monger.—Go, go, drive a trade.—Theſe were your commodities,—you treacherous trull!—this was the merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my houſe, plac'd you next myſelf, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feather'd your neſt?

Foib. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience, I'll confeſs all. Mr. Mirabell ſeduc'd me; I am not the firſt that he has wheedled with his diſſembling tongue.—Your ladyſhip's own wiſdom has been deluded by him, then how ſhould I, a poor ignorant, defend myſelf?—O,

madam, if you knew but what he promis'd me, and how he aſſur'd me your ladyſhip ſhould come to no damage,—or elſe the wealth of the Indies ſhould not have brib'd me to conſpire againſt ſo good, ſo ſweet, ſo kind a lady, as you have been to me.

Lady. No damage? What, to betray me, to marry me to a caſt ſerving man! No damage? O, thou frontleſs impudence!

Foib. *(Kneels.)* Pray, do but hear me, madam:—He could not marry your ladyſhip, madam:—no, indeed; his marriage was to have been void in law; for he was marry'd to me firſt, to ſecure your ladyſhip:—yes, indeed, I enquir'd of the law in that caſe, before I would meddle or make.

Lady. What, then, I have been your property, have I?—[FOIBLE *riſes.*]—I have been convenient to you, it ſeems, while you were catering for Mirabell.—I have been broker for you!—This exceeds all precedent.—I am brought to fine uſes, to become a botcher of ſecond-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews!—I'll couple you; yes, I'll baſte you together, you and your Philander; I'll Duke's-Place you, as I'm a perſon.—Your turtle is in cuſtody already: You ſhall coo in the ſame cage, if there be a conſtable or warrant in the pariſh.

Exit Lady WISHFORT.

Foib. O, that ever I was born! O, that I was ever marry'd!—A bride! ay, I ſhall be a Bridewell-bride.—

Enter Mrs. FAINALL.

Oh! oh! oh!

Mrs *Fain.* Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foib. O, madam, my lady's gone for a conſtable; I ſhall be had to a juſtice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp; poor Waitwell's gone to priſon already.

Mrs. *Fain.* Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give ſecurity for him. This is all Marwood's and my huſband's doing.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, madam: She was in my lady's cloſet, and overheard all that you ſaid to me before dinner; ſhe ſent the letter to my lady; and, that miſſing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arreſt Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and, in the mean time, Mrs. Marwood declar'd all to my lady.

Mrs. *Fain.* Was there no mention made of me in the letter?—My mother does not ſuſpect my being in the confederacy? I fancy, Marwood has not told her, tho' ſhe has told my huſband.

Foib. Yes, madam; but my lady did not ſee that part; we ſtifled the letter, before ſhe read ſo far.—Has that miſchievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyſhip, then?

Mrs. *Fain.* Ay, all's out; my affair with Mirabell, every thing, diſcover'd. This is the laſt day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foib. Indeed, madam, and ſo 'tis a comfort, if you knew all:—He has been even with your ladyſhip:—which I cou'd have told you long enough ſince, but I love to keep peace and quietneſs by my good will; I had rather bring friends together, than ſet 'em at diſtance:—But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related, than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. *Fain.* Say'ſt thou ſo, Foible? Can'ſt thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, madam; ſo can Mrs. Mincing; we have had many a fair word from madam Marwood, to conceal ſomething that paſs'd in our chamber one evening, when you were at the play, and we were thought to have gone a walking: But we went up unawares,—tho' we were ſworn to ſecrecy too; madam Marwood took a book, and ſwore us upon it; but it was but a book of poems,—So

long as it was not a bible-oath, we may break it with a ſafe conſcience.

Mrs. *Fain.* This diſcovery is the moſt opportune thing I cou'd wiſh.—

Enter MINCING.

Now, Mincing,——

Minc. My lady wou'd ſpeak with Mrs. Foible, mem:—Mr. Mirabell is with her:—He has ſet your ſpouſe at liberty, Mrs. Foible; and wou'd have you hide yourſelf in my lady's room, till my old lady's anger is abated.—O, my old lady is in a perilous paſſion, at ſomething Mr. Fainall has ſaid; he ſwears, and my old lady cries; there's a fearful hurricane, I vow:—He ſays, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorc'd.

Mrs. *Fain.* Does your lady, or Mirabell, know that?

Minc. Yes, mem; they have ſent me to ſee, if Sir Wilfull be ſober, and to bring him to them. My lady is reſolv'd to have him, I think, rather than loſe ſuch a vaſt ſum as ſix thouſand pound.—O, come Mrs. Foible; I hear my oldl ady.

Mrs. *Fain.* Foible, you muſt tell Mincing, that ſhe muſt prepare to vouch, when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, madam.

Minc. O, yes, mem; I'll vouch any thing for your ladyſhip's ſervice, be what it will.

Exeunt MINCING *and* FOIBLE.

Enter Lady WISHFORT *and* Mrs. MARWOOD.

Lady. O, my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have receiv'd from your goodneſs? To you I owe the timely diſcovery of the falſe vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impoſtor, Sir Rowland; and now you are become an interceſſor

with my ſon-in-law, to ſave the honour of my houſe, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world; or elſe I would retire to deſerts and ſolitudes, and feed harmleſs ſheep by groves and purling ſtreams.—Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourſelves, and be ſhepherdeſſes.

Mar. Let us firſt deſpatch the affair in hand, madam; we ſhall have leiſure to think of retirement afterwards.—Here is one, who is concern'd in the treaty.

Lady. O, daughter, daughter! Is it poſſible, thou ſhould'ſt be my child, bone of my bone, fleſh of my fleſh, and, as I may ſay, another me; and yet tranſgreſs the moſt minute particle of ſevere virtue?

Mrs. *Fain.* I don't underſtand your ladyſhip.

Lady. Not underſtand! Why have you not been naught? Have you not been ſophiſticated? Not underſtand!—Here I am ruin'd, to compound for your caprices: I muſt pawn my plate, and my jewels, and ruin my niece; and all little enough,—

Mrs *Fain.* I am wrong'd, and abus'd, and ſo are you: 'Tis a falſe accuſation, as falſe as your friend there,—ay, or your friend's friend, my falſe huſband.

Mar. My friend, Mrs. Fainall! Your huſband my friend! What do you mean?

Mrs. *Fain.* I know what I mean, madam, and ſo do you; and ſo ſhall the world at a time convenient.

Mar. I am ſorry to ſee you ſo paſſionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence.—But I have done: I am ſorry, my zeal to ſerve your ladyſhip and family, ſhould admit of miſconſtruction, or make me liable to affronts.—You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair, in which I am not perſonally concern'd.

Lady. O, dear friend, I am ſo aſham'd that you ſhould meet with ſuch returns,—You ought to aſk pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature; ſhe de-

ſerves more from you, than all your life can accompliſh.—O, don't leave me deſtitute in this perplexity; no; ſtick to me, my good genius.

Mrs. *Fain.* Stick to you! Ay, like a leach, to ſuck your beſt blood; ſhe'll drop off when ſhe's full.—Madam, you ſhan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a braſs counter, in compoſition for me. I defy 'em all. Let 'em prove their aſperſions: I know my own innocence, and dare ſtand a trial.

Exit Mrs. FAINALL.

Lady. Why, if ſhe ſhould be innocent, if ſhe ſhould be wrong'd, after all, ha? I don't know what to think.—O, dear friend, I can't believe it; no, no;—as ſhe ſays, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. *Mar.* Prove it, madam! What, and have your name proſtituted in a public court? Yours and your daughter's reputation worry'd at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers?

Lady. O, 'tis inſupportable! No, no; dear friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound: I'll give up all, myſelf and my all, my niece and her all,—any thing, every thing,—for compoſition.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay, madam, I adviſe nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniencies, which, perhaps, you have overſeen.

Enter FAINALL.

Fain. Well, madam,—I have ſuffer'd myſelf to be overcome by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and am content, you ſhall enjoy your own proper eſtate during life, on condition you oblige yourſelf never to marry, under ſuch penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands;—the next impoſture may not be ſo timely detected.—Next, my wife ſhall ſettle on me the remainder of her fortune, not

made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my diſcretion.

Lady. This is moſt inhumanly ſavage.

Fain. Laſtly, I will be endow'd, in right of my wife, with that ſix thouſand pound, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your poſſeſſion; and which ſhe has forfeited (as will appear by the laſt will and teſtament of your deceas'd huſband, Sir Jonathan Wiſhfort,) by her diſobedience in contracting herſelf againſt your conſent or knowledge; and by refuſing the offer'd match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

Lady. My nephew was non compos, and could not make his addreſſes.

Fain. I come to make demands;—I'll hear no objections.

Lady. You will grant me time to conſider?

Fain. Yes, while the inſtrument is drawing, to which you muſt ſet your hand, till more ſufficient deeds can be perfected; which, I will take care, ſhall be done with all poſſible ſpeed. In the mean while, I will go for the ſaid inſtrument; and, till my return, you may ballance this matter in your own diſcretion.

Exit FAINALL.

Lady. This inſolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel.—Muſt I be ſubject to this mercileſs villain?

Mar. 'Tis ſevere, indeed, madam, that you ſhou'd ſmart for your daughter's wantonneſs.

Lady. 'Twas againſt my conſent that ſhe marry'd this Barbarian; but ſhe wou'd have him, tho' her year was not out.

Enter Sir WILFULL *and* MILLAMANT.

—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Sir *Wil.* Aunt, your ſervant.

Lady. Out, caterpillar! Call not me aunt; I know thee not.

Sir *Wil.* I confeſs, I have been a little in diſguiſe, as they ſay, 'Sheart!—and I'm ſorry for't. What wou'd you have? I hope, I committed no offence, aunt; and if I did, I am willing to make ſatisfaction;—and what can a man ſay fairer? If I have broke any thing, I'll pay for't, an it coſt a pound:—an ſo let that content for what's paſt, and make no more words. For what's to come,—to pleaſure you, I'm willing to marry my couſin; ſo, pray let's all be friends: ſhe and I are agreed upon the matter before a witneſs.

Lady. How's this, dear niece? Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

Mill. I am content to be a ſacrifice to your repoſe, madam; and, to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were miſinform'd, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in perſon, and be a witneſs, that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood;—and for the contract that paſs'd between Mirabell and me, I have oblig'd him to make a reſignation of it in your ladyſhip's preſence;—he is in my room, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady. Well, I'll ſwear, I am ſomething reviv'd at this teſtimony of your obedience:—But, I cannot admit the traitor,—

Mil. If you diſoblige him, he may reſent your refuſal, and inſiſt upon the contract ſtill. Then, 'tis the laſt time he will be offenſive to you.

Lady. Are you ſure, it will be the laſt time?—If I were ſure of that,—Shall I never ſee him again?

Mill. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt; let him come in. Why, we are ſworn brothers and fellow-travellers:—we are to be Pylades and Oreſtes, he and I:—he is to be my interpreter in foreign parts: he has been over ſeas once already; and, with proviſo that I marry my couſin, will croſs 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart,

I'll call him in:—an I ſet on't once, he ſhall come in; and ſee who'll hinder him.

[*Goes to the door, and hems.*

Mar. This is precious fooling, if it wou'd paſs; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady. O, dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately.

Exit MARWOOD.

Enter MIRABELL.

Sir *Wil.* Look up, man; I'll ſtand by you.—'Sbud, an ſhe do frown, ſhe can't kill you;—beſides,—harkee, —ſhe dare not frown deſperately, becauſe her face is none of her own: 'Sheart, and ſhe ſhou'd, her forehead wou'd wrinkle like the coat of a cream cheeſe:—but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mir. If a deep ſenſe of the many injuries I have offer'd to ſo good a lady, with a ſincere remorſe, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the leaſt glance of compaſſion, I am too happy.—Ah, madam, there was a time,—Nay, kill me not, by turning from me in diſdain.—I come not to plead for favour; nay, not for pardon; I am a ſuppliant only for pity.—I am going, where I never ſhall behold you more,——

Sir *Wil.* How, fellow-traveller?—You ſhall go by yourſelf then.

Mir. Let me be pitied firſt, and afterwards forgotten;—I aſk no more.

Sir *Wil.* By'r lady, a very reaſonable requeſt, and will coſt you nothing, aunt.—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt;—why, you muſt, an you are a chriſtian.

Lady. Well, nephew, upon your account,—Ah, he has a falſe inſinuating tongue!—Well, Sir, I will ſtifle my juſt reſentment at my nephew's requeſt:——I will endeavour what I can to forget:—But on proviſo, that you reſign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mir. It is in writing, and with papers of concern;

but I have ſent my ſervant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgements for your tranſcendent goodneſs.

Lady. O, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue!

Enter FAINALL *and* MARWOOD.

Fain. Your date of deliberation, madam, is expir'd. —Here is the inſtrument:—Are you prepar'd to ſign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having match'd herſelf, by my direction, to Sir Wilfull.

Fain. That ſham is too groſs to paſs on me;—tho' 'tis impos'd on you, madam.

Mill. Sir, I have given my conſent.

Mir. And, Sir, I have reſign'd my pretenſions.

Sir *Wil.* And, Sir, I aſſert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, Sir, and of your inſtrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an inſtrument, Sir, I have an old fox by my thigh ſhall hack your inſtrument of ram vellum to ſhreds, Sir; it ſhall not be ſufficient for a mittimus, or a taylor's meaſure; therefore withdraw your inſtrument, Sir; or, by'r lady, I ſhall draw mine.

Lady. Hold, nephew, hold.

Mill. Good Sir Wilfull, reſpite your valour.

Fain. Indeed! Are you provided of your guard, with your ſingle beef-eater there? But I'm prepar'd for you; and inſiſt upon my firſt propoſal. You ſhall ſubmit your own eſtate to my management, and abſolutely make over my wife's to my ſole uſe; as purſuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant.—I ſuppoſe, madam, your conſent is not requiſite in this caſe; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your reſignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right.—You may draw your fox, if you pleaſe, Sir, and make a Bear-garden flouriſh ſomewhere elſe; for here it will not avail.—This, my Lady Wiſhfort, muſt be ſubſcrib'd, or your darling

daughter's turn'd a-drift, to ſink or ſwim, as ſhe and the current of this town can agree.

Lady. Is there no means, no remedy, to ſtop my ruin?—Ungrateful wretch! doſt thou not owe thy being, thy ſubſiſtence, to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll anſwer you, when I have the reſt of it in my poſſeſſion.

Mir. But that you wou'd not accept of a remedy from my hands; perhaps, I cou'd adviſe——

Lady. O what? what?—Harkee,—I'll break my nephew's match, you ſhall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but ſave me from this imminent danger.

Mir. Will you? I take you at your word. I aſk no more.—I muſt have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay; any body, any body.

Mir. Foible is one, and a penitent.—Come in.

Enter Mrs. FAINALL, FOIBLE, *and* MINCING. MIRABELL *and* Lady WISFORT *talk with them apart.*

Mar. O my ſhame! theſe corrupt things are brought hither to expoſe me. [*To* FAINALL.

Fain. If it muſt all come out, why, let 'em know it; 'tis *but the Way of the World.* That ſhall not urge me to relinquiſh or abate one tittle of my terms: no, I will inſiſt the more. [*To* MARWOUD.

Foib. Yes indeed, madam, I'll take my bible-oath of it.

Minc. And ſo will I, mem.

Lady. O, Marwood, Marwood, art thou falſe? My friend deceive me? Haſt thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mar. Have you ſo much ingratitude and injuſtice, to give credit, againſt your friend, to the aſperſions of two ſuch mercenary trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, mem! I ſcorn your words.—'Tis true;—We found you and Mr. Fainall in the

blue garret; by the ſame token, you ſwore us to ſecreſy upon Meſſalina's Poems.—Mercenary! No; if we wou'd have been mercenary, we ſhou'd have held our tongues; you wou'd have brib'd us ſufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an inſignificant thing.

Exeunt MINCING *and* FOIBLE.

Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer.—You,—thing!—that was a wife, ſhall ſmart for this: I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy ſhame: your perſon ſhall be naked as your repuation.

Mrs. *Fain.* I deſpiſe you, and defy your malice.—You have aſpers'd me wrongfully; I have prov'd your falſehood.—Go, you, and your treacherous—I will not name it—ſtarve together,—periſh.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear.—Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is ſmall comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mir. O, in good time.

Enter WAITWELL, *with a Box of Writings.*

Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

Lady. O, Sir Rowland!—Well, raſcal,—

Wait. What your ladyſhip pleaſes.—I have brought the black box at laſt, madam.

Mir. Give it me.—Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, Sir, rubbing their eyes, juſt riſen from ſleep.

Exit WAITWELL.

Fain. 'Sdeath, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

Enter PETULANT.

Pet. How now? what's the matter? who's hand's out?

Enter WITWOUD.

Wit. Hey day! what are you all got together, like players at the end of the laſt act?

Mir. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requeſted your hands, as witneſſes to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay, I do, my hand I remember;—Petulant ſet his mark.

Mir. You wrong him; his name is fairly written, as ſhall appear.—Madam, your promiſe.

Lady. Ay, ay, Sir; upon my honour.

Mir. Mr. Fainall, it is now time, that you ſhou'd know, that your lady, while ſhe was at her own diſpoſal, and before you had by your inſinuations wheedled her out of a pretended ſettlement of the greateſt part of her fortune,—

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mir. Yes, Sir:—I ſay, that this lady, while a widow, having, it ſeems, received ſome cautions reſpecting your inconſtancy, and tyranny of temper,—ſhe did, I ſay, by the wholeſome advice of friends, and of ſages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this ſame, as her act and deed, to me, in truſt, and to the uſes within-mention'd.—You may read, if you pleaſe;—[*Holding out the parchment.*]—tho', perhaps, what is written on the back may ſerve your occaſions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir.—What's here? Damnation!

[*Reads.*] A deed of conveyance of the whole eſtate real of Arabella Languiſh, widow, in truſt to Edward Mirabell.

Confuſion!

Mir. Even ſo, Sir; 'tis the *Way of the World*, Sir; of the widows of the world.—I ſuppoſe, this deed may bear an elder date, than what you have obtain'd from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend!—Then thus I'll be reveng'd—

[*Draws his ſword, and runs at Mrs.* FAINALL.]

Sir *Wil.* Hold, Sir; now you may make your Bear-garden flouriſh ſomewhere elſe, Sir. (*Stops* FAINALL.)

Fain. Mirabell,—you ſhall hear of this, Sir;—be ſure, you ſhall.—Let me paſs, oaf.

Exit FAINALL.

Mrs. *Fain.* Madam, you ſeem to ſtifle your reſentment: you had better give it vent.

Mar. Yes, it ſhall have vent, and to your confuſion; or I'll periſh in the attempt.

Exit MARWOOD.

Lady. O, daughter, daughter, 'tis plain, thou haſt inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. *Fain.* Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whoſe advice all is owing.

Lady. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promiſe, and I muſt perform mine.—Firſt, I pardon, for your ſake, Sir Rowland and Foible:—The next thing is, to break the matter to my nephew;—and how to do that—

Mir. For that, madam, give yourſelf no trouble;—Let me have your conſent; Sir Wilfull is my friend:—he has had compaſſion upon lovers; and generouſly engag'd a volunteer in this action, for our ſervice; and now deſigns to proſecute his travels.

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry; My couſin's a fine lady; and the gentleman loves her, and ſhe loves him, and they deſerve one another; my reſolution is, to ſee foreign parts: I have ſet on't; and, when I'm ſet on't, I muſt do't;—And, if theſe two gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think, they may be ſpar'd.

Pet. For my part, I ſay little:—I think, things are beſt, off or on.

Wit. Egad, I underſtand nothing of the matter :—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-ſchool.

Lady. Well, Sir, take her; and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mill. Why does not the man take me? Wou'd you have me give myſelf to you over again?

Mir. Ay, and over and over again.—[*Kiſſes her hand.*]—Well, heav'n grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy, after you're marry'd.

Lady. I cannot but have ſome fears upon me yet, that my ſon Fainall will purſue ſome deſperate courſe.

Mir. Madam, diſquiet not yourſelf on that account; to my knowledge, his circumſtances are ſuch, he muſt of force comply.—To you, madam, I am ready to reſtore your deed of truſt; it may be a means, well manag'd, to make you live eaſily together.—

From hence let thoſe be warn'd, who mean to wed,
Leſt mutual falſehood ſtain the bridal-bed;
For each deceiver to his coſt may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.

Exeunt omnes.

THE END.

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